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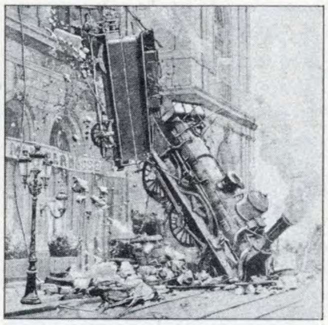

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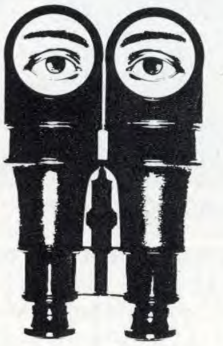

Mayfair Magazine,
95A Chancery Lane,
London WC2A 1DZ

It comes as no surprise to learn that BRM team driver, Howden Ganley, whom we featured in Mayfair Vol. 6 No. 10, is now being feted as one of the up-and-coming Formula One stars.
Ganley, a cool unflappable New Zealander has been unanimously awarded the Wolfgang von Trips Memorial Trophy by the Grand Prix Drivers Association, as the most successful newcomer to Grand Prix racing.
Highlight of Howden's 1971 season was the Italian Grand Prix at Monza, when despite minor trouble with his car, he finished eight-tenths of a second behind the winner.
Incidentally, King Magazine, now incorporated in Mayfair, had the same ability to pick winners. They signed as their motoring correspondent an unknown Scottish sports car driver. His name? Jackie Stewart.

Have you ever wondered about the fate of those adventurous men who embark on organised mini-bus treks? Do they travel across continents surrounded by fifteen prim school-teachers or by a dozen lively nymphomaniacs?
Frontier International, the leading people in the mini-trek business, tell us that on their trips at least, the women outnumber the men by six to four! We were not particularly surprised, then, to learn that last year the company received more than a thousand applications from would-be drivers. They took fifty. But it's not pleasure all the way for the man behind the wheel – one worthy told us how he'd taken a party of Nuns to the Holy Land. They sang hymns continuously and stopped for prayers at least once every half-hour!

We much liked the schoolboy reminiscence of John Timpson, the *Today* compere (who for our money is far and away the best of the radio comperes, especially when compared with his stablemate Robert Robinson whose light bantering tones belong more properly in *The Archers*).
Timpson, following an interview with a cheerful milkman, recalled his own boyhood when he helped deliver the milk. This particular milkman was a romeo roundsman and would disappear for half hours at a time inside the houses of his more nubile customers. His explanation to the unsuspecting Timpson was that he was just popping in for a cup of tea. One morning, however, after a particularly strenuous bout, he reappeared, and forgetting his cover story of supposed refreshment said to Timpson, 'Whew, I couldn't half do with a cuppa.'

Researching pictures for our stocking tribute this month we chanced upon the female legwear pictured below. The girl, bless her restricted little waist, is wearing the new Mary Quant 'Sly Thighs'.
Basically a pair of dark stockings built onto their own skimpy suspender belt, they're selling briskly to the young dolly birds of the metropolis at 60p a time.
It seems a new generation of young men are about to be turned-on to the bare thigh bit. At present demand is so high that supplies are limited to the larger London stores. We hear they'll be up amongst you avid northern readers before summer. The full stocking treatment begins on page 52.

Enticing come-back: good old stockings and suspenders ride again

Thinking of buying a car stereo system? More and more drivers are, apparently, and over recent months the market has been positively booming. With over thirty different models to choose from, however, it's a confusing area for the newcomer. *Which?* hasn't yet done a car stereo survey, so in the meantime we present a quick Mayfair guide . . .
There are basically two types of unit: cassette and cartridge. The first, developed by Philips eight years ago, uses tape divided into four channels – two (for the stereo effect) running in each direction so the tape can be turned over. The cartridge system, developed in US specifically for cars, uses eight-track tape on a continuous loop – so they don't have to be turned over.
A major problem with car tape machines has been reliability. Early models tended to chew up tape or simply stop working. It's now fairly safe to say that you're unlikely to get a dud for £37 or more.
Our survey rates the following of the most popular players in this order for reliability, sound quality and value for money: Automatic Radio CME1476 cartridge (£37·40); Radiomobile 102S cartridge (£39·50) and Automatic Radio CSA9934 cassette (£62·35); GR9 cassette player (£44·20), speakers £6 extra; Automatic Radio MES1454 cartridge (£44·90); Radiomobile 103S cartridge (£58); Sony TC-20 cassette (£74·75); Motorola 132 cartridge (£40·44); Radiomobile cassette (£44·60).
There are other less popular units made by Toshiba (good but very expensive), Courier (have given trouble), Eagle and Lear Jet (not widely available).
There are several good eight-track cartridge units under £40. You need to pay more for a good cassette player.
If you're interested in quadraphonic systems (a sort of 'double' stereo), JVC Nivico and Motorola each do machines at £105 and £77 (without speakers) respectively.
Aside from that, should you require detailed advice, as good a company as any to try is Stereosound in London's Walpole Street (01-730 3624), one of the few firms specialising in car stereo.

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LETTERS

This is where we invite you to add to the controversy and the anecdote of Mayfair. Write to 'Letters', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ

Either I bring out the tease in women particularly strongly (I'm stuck with a round baby face) or teasing is a more widespread proclivity among females than I thought.

A case in point was when I worked as an assistant to a swish interior decorator during my college hols.

We had been redecorating the bedrooms of a large suburban house for several weeks. Each morning we were greeted by the blonde lady of the house who spent most of the daytime in a tiny pink bikini, sunbathing in the garden at the rear. She had an almost plain face but was blessed with a superb willowy figure supporting a pair of breasts that bulged from the top of her bikini bra.

On the last day I went to the house alone, to finish clearing up, put the last touches to the paintwork and remove our equipment.

The woman let me in, gave me a cup of coffee and went out into the garden to start her sunbathing routine.

An hour later, I chanced to look out of the rear bedroom window into the garden. The woman was directly below me face down on one of those long reclining garden seats. The strap of her bikini bra was unfastened across her back and her panties were tugged down over her upper thighs, baring the perfect white cheeks of her bottom to the sun.

I gazed soundlessly for ten minutes but the woman didn't move an inch. She might have been asleep.

I had finished packing our equipment in that bedroom when I leaned out of the window again. This time she was lying on her back, her bikini bra discarded, her breasts slightly flattened but still firm against her ribcage. Her panties were still tugged down, revealing a bush of blonde pubic hair.

Two hours later she was stark naked, on her back, thighs slightly parted.

By the time I was ready to leave she was back in her bikini but from the colour of my face she must have known I had been watching her. She seemed very knowing and quite unconcerned. It had obviously been a deliberate tease.

L.S., Stockport, Cheshire (full name and address withheld)

Congratulations on a fine feature; 'Flycycles made for Two' in Vol. 7 No. 1. It is always good to read a motorcycling article in a magazine not devoted to the sport.

Considering that the majority of the world's top motorcycle riders are from the UK, have you noticed how little press coverage the sport receives in this country?

The endurance and speed of these sidecar combinations is a quite fascinating aspect.

For instance in the 1971 Isle of Man TT, the 500cc sidecar winners lapped at 86.21 mph and the 750 winners at 86.86 – on such a twisty circuit the larger, more powerful engine makes little difference.

On the continent at Hockenheim, the 500cc sidecar race winners averaged 90.41 mph and at Spa Francorchamps, 110.986 mph.

All these machines were German built and BMW engined. The BMW engine is strongly favoured by the top sidecar racers in Europe.

In your feature you have two small pictures described as: 'close-ups of the mechanical wizardry of these 100 mph wheelchairs.' The picture on the right, shows a British engined outfit, but the picture to the left is the rear wheel area of a 250 Yamaha – a solo machine capable of approximately 135 mph. However, it's a minor mistake. I wonder how many other readers spotted it?

M. Strurr, Western Avenue North, Gabalfa, Cardiff.

Let's confess, we knew, but it was such a fascinating piece of engineering we had to include.

I have before me, Mayfair Vol. 7 No. 1. Looking at the pictures of Lynda Hewetson I am struck by her strong likeness to Princess Anne. I wonder if other readers have noticed this?

The picture at the top of page 36 where Lynda is tugging down the left side of her pants is so very like the Princess. The picture on page 41 also shows how similar the Princess and Lynda are.

D. Kyne, BM Box 805, London WC1V

Edward Knox claims to have friends who are, if not near the throne, then at least trying to hide behind it so we asked him to investigate. He sends this note: I am sitting in a tree round the back of Anne's parents' place in Palace Gardens. I am clutching a bottle of auntie's patent parsnip wine and leather remover and a pair of powerful night glasses which I got from a monster Christmas cracker (more about her, later). I have failed to establish any similarity between the Princess and Lynda so far, as the plastic lens keeps falling out of the binoculars. Must finish now – a balding aristocratic gentleman with a distinguished nose with his hands behind his back and surrounded by a horde of midget yapping dogs is standing under my tree with an interesting expression on his face.

Your Quest interview (Vol. 7 No. 1) with the landlady who took the initiative to seduce her student lodger, reminds me of a landlady of my own.

My first lodgings away from home were in the Croxteth district of Liverpool, where I was working on a provincial newspaper.

I had a small bedsit on the ground floor directly opposite the landlady's own rooms. She was a rather attractive woman in her mid-thirties and didn't appear to be losing any of her shapeliness. Late one evening about two weeks after I moved in, I was in my underpants and about to climb into bed when she knocked on my door. I slipped into my dressing gown and opened it. She was wrapped in a woolly housecoat which she held fastened in front of her and carried a torch in her hand.

Her fusebox, she explained, seemed to have expired and there were no lights downstairs. The box was too high on the wall for her to reach and would I come and mend it?

Down in the basement she gave me the torch and a chair to stand on. I could barely reach the fusebox myself and in trying to do so my dressing gown flapped open. Trying to fasten it with one hand I dropped the card of fuse wire she had given me. As I swung the torch around to find it, the beam of light struck the landlady.

Her housecoat was wide open at the front, revealing the reason for her apparently lithe figure. She was wearing a tight black crutchless corset which pushed her breasts proudly upwards and black stockings held to the corset by suspenders. The effect was electrifying. The torchlight also revealed her right hand about to alight on my thigh.

I dropped the torch. She picked it up and quite unconcernedly shone it on me. My state of excitement must have been quite obvious for she giggled girlishly as the light played on me.

I felt not unlike a rare species of fly pinned to the wall. She told me quite firmly, to get down from the chair and as I did so, pulled open the front of my underpants and shone the torch down into them.

I just stood there, mouth open and feeling rather stupid.

We didn't even go to the bedroom – she just pulled me down on the floor there and then.

She later informed me the fuse had not blown. She had, in fact, merely removed the light bulb in her living room.

P.A., Stretford, Manchester (name and address withheld)

I must say I enjoyed J. D. Mulliner's Sauna story. He describes remarkably well my own state upon waking after the night before. I first used the tremendous recuperative powers of a sauna many years ago on a business trip to Sweden and have sworn by them since in Britain.

Saunas are now quite commonplace especially in London, though there seem to be misconceptions about the young ladies who work in them – possibly because anything which involves naked men and young ladies together can lead in most male minds to only one rather exciting thought. After all, what sort of girls enjoy being surrounded by men in the buff? Only the obvious sort. Unfortunately it's not true. The girls are well paid, it's a good job and they do it properly – but that's as far as it goes. The rest is in the mind. So don't be too disappointed if you go to one and your member muscle remains unmassaged.

In all the saunas I've used there hasn't been any of the other – which is just as well. The state I'm in when I use them, I just don't have one iota of interest in anything else but coming out the other end a little more alive.

P. Evans, Chatham, Kent (full address withheld)

Does any other Mayfair reader feel the same way I do about long, female finger-nails? To me, they're as evocative and sexual as glimpsed breast or thigh. It's not a kink or a fad – I like my sex straight, thank you – but simply a fact that I'm turned on by those long, sharpened talons.

It started in a hotel lounge a few years ago. I was waiting for a friend and in the same lounge was a gangling, flat-chested young bird with the most beautiful long, manicured finger-nails. They were enhanced still further by the solid rings and heavy gold bracelet she was wearing. She was obviously waiting for someone too and she was impatient; those nails drummed steadily on the glass table top with a delicious rapping sound. I was mesmerised. As it turned out, neither of our contacts turned up and we began talking. We had a meal together and things progressed very satisfactorily from there. Two hours later

turn to page 10

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LETTERS

continued from page 9

those long, velvety finger-nails were scrabbling with the zip on my fly and later still they were gouging passionately into my back.

If you'll pardon the pun, finger-nails have become my rule of thumb; if a woman looks after her nails, I've discovered, she usually takes a pride in her appearance – and her performance.

K.D., Hove, Sussex (full name and address withheld on request)

In your article, 'Paddlers of the Deep' (Vol. 7 No. 1), Bernard Dumpleton states, 'An American schooner, the Savannah, was fitted with an auxiliary engine . . . ' For Mr Dumpleton's information, as well as your readers', the Savannah was not a schooner – at least, not when she sailed and paddled her way across the Atlantic.

It has been some time since I saw a picture of the Savannah, but I'm positive that she was square rigged – as a ship or barque.

As a further point of interest, there are several stern wheelers preserved in British Columbia, the Yukon and Alaska, as museums and tourist attractions. May I say how much I enjoy your magazine. After arriving in England from Canada and reading Mayfair, I cancelled my subscription to Playboy, considering it now, a waste of money.

Michael L. Ball, Ladycroft, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire.

Sitting in a restaurant recently I unwittingly overheard a conversation that neatly summed up the avarice of some girls. Four young secretaries were having lunch together and one, apparently, had a new boy friend. What was he like, the others asked?

Well, replied this vapid faced dolly, he had this lovely new sports car and he took me to this super place to eat . . .

H.E., Davies Avenue, Heald Green, Cheadle, Cheshire (full name withheld on request)

Congratulations, Richard Gilbert, on a fine piece of categorizing in Mayfair Vol. 7 No. 1 (those migratory birds who land at my place). He captured the essence of the American female tourist abroad. However, I think he missed one of their inherent characteristics; they seem to love to dominate. I spent a month in the company of one such last summer and used as I was to English girl-friends, it took a few bitter arguments before I'd adapted to the aggressive sort of in-fighting needed to cope with Miss USA. She told me later that the aggressive domination adopted by American women was, as far as she was concerned, self-protection from the effete American male who was more content to put a gun to his shoulder than take his woman in hand.

We'd met in Ios, one of those idyllic Greek islands, and were living rough on the beach – you can still get away with that in some places – and one evening we went into town for a meal. The waiter was slow in bringing the food and suddenly America leapt to her feet and made for the door. I can still remember with satisfaction the look of stunned surprise when she turned round to see me still lounging in my seat. She fully expected me to trail after her. We exchanged a few shouted lines across the crowded restaurant and then she stormed off. I finished my meal alone and walked slowly back to the beach. Just by the sea-shore a small shadow emerged from the rocks and whispered 'I'm sorry'.

Later, on the beach, she showed me how sorry she really was.

T.C., Balornick, East Glasgow (full name and address withheld on request)

I heartily disagree with P.H. of Little Heath when he writes (Vol. 7 No. 1) that a girl is only as fast as the car she drives. Of all the girls I have known who had cars, those with the new sporty models were definitely the ones less likely to come across down a dark country lane.

In my experience those who drive oldish bangers and small saloons like minis are less interested in the effect they are making by speeding around in a fast smooth set of wheels and more interested in the man in the passenger seat.

Given the chance I'd opt for the dolly in the mini. Quite apart from other considerations, the

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LETTERS

continued from page 10

midges and other flying insects which pepper country evening air can get quite nasty with your bare bottom when it's sticking out of a low sports car. And how on earth do you get the windows properly steamed up? Impossible. Give me the privacy of a saloon any day.
T.M., Merry Oak, Southampton (full name withheld)

Although I had always considered myself broad-minded about sex and all things related thereto, I have to admit that I regarded 'men's magazines' as the lowest form of pleasure possible.
Certainly I glanced at them when my brother bought them or when his friends left any lying about, but, apart from this feeling of semi-curiosity, I felt disgusted by the whole idea of them.
However, having married just six months ago, I had to accept the idea of these 'wretched items' littered around our flat as my husband is an avid reader. Curiosity got the better of me one day and I had more than a surreptitious look of his collection. Much to my surprise, it was your magazine that I found both interesting and entertaining.
In fact, I was quite turned on. Fascinated by the entire contents. So much so that a passionate and lengthy period of love-making followed on my husband's return from his job. I didn't admit to him what had brought about my impassioned attitude. In fact, had he not, a few days later, brought in another copy of your magazine and asked me if I wanted to read it, he would never have found out that I find these magazines stimulating. The only worry that I had was that, finding that the sight of your really first class models so excited me, I wasn't quite normal. However, on discussing the subject with friends of both sexes, it appears that a number of the females in the gathering found nude girls in your magazine quite provoking and stimulating. Thus, this aspect no longer worries me. All I can say is that I'm glad I took such an interest in your magazine because it has made me improve myself in respect to figure and my attitude to scanty and sexy underwear which, like all males, my husband likes to see.
Since I have re-moulded myself (for want of a better expression) my husband has become far more attentive and says he finds me far more attractive.
Incidentally, Mayfair is surely preferable to any other type of sexual stimulation e.g.; beating – which we have tried as well as many others. It is not painful and I find it far longer lasting.
Mrs S.E.H., Leyton, London (name and address withheld)

I ran my kid sister back to school last Sunday after the holidays. Believe me, Leslie Thomas's book 'His Lordship' isn't in it. Kate took me for a tour round the school. In her dorm (only six beds) two of the other fifteen-year-olds were in their scanties and very sexy sights they were. Neither they nor Kate seemed the slightest bit concerned and one of them gave me a broad grin and put her hands inside the elastic of her pants. At my age, 26, you can sense when girls are just waiting for it. Those girls were, I swear. In my little MG all the way home I was driving bow-legged. Raise the leaving age to 16? If they do I'm volunteering to be games master at a girls' school.
J.B., Eaton Socon (name and address withheld).

A friend of ours (father of a most nubile scholar) told us a similar story last week. Any further evidence of what goes on in girls' schools? Free subscriptions for the best letters. Tell you what, we'll get Ronald Cobb to illustrate them. His schoolgirls really turn us on.

I heartily agree with Boddy's proposals in Vol. 7 No. 1. I believe that many accidents must have their root in drivers who go too slowly rather than too rapidly.
Surely most of us have experience of those dawdling motorists who seem to appear from every side road at weekends with car loads of kids and aged relatives. I find that few things infuriate me more than being stuck behind one of these motorists who insists on driving under the legal limit on an empty road and being unable to overtake. Personally, the unhappier I get behind the

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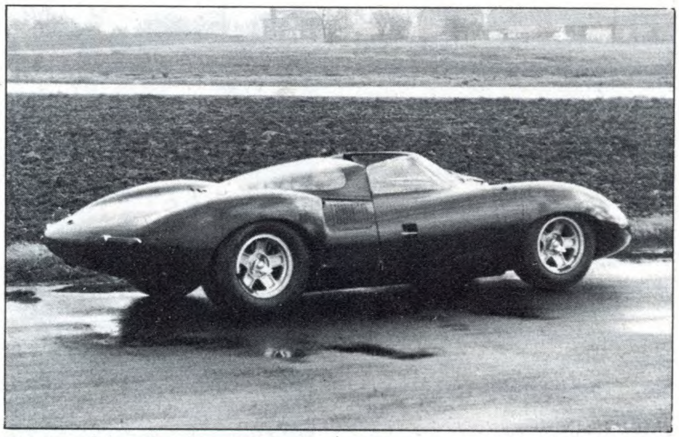
LETTERS

continued from page 81

wheel the more likely I am to let rashness override caution.
P.D., Highfield, Hemel Hempstead (name withheld)

A friend of ours who has driven cars for twenty years without accident swears by the rule of thumb that one should always be prepared for every other vehicle in sight to suddenly pull highly dangerous stunts without warning. In this way, he claims, you'll always be prepared.

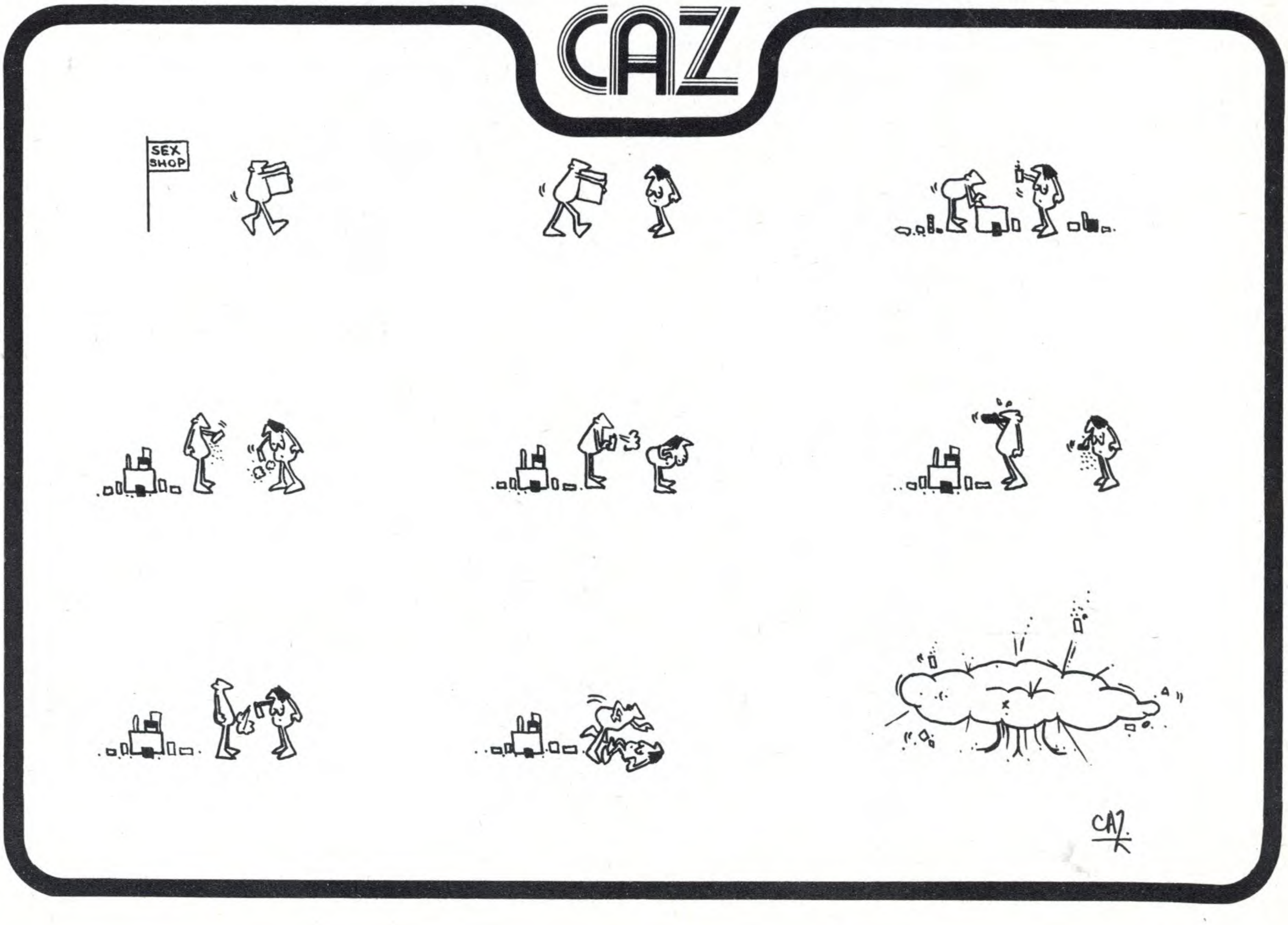


I've heard a rumour that Jaguars are returning to sports car racing in the near future. I'm sceptical about the whole idea. I remember well those brilliant days at Le Mans when the blue Ecurie Ecosse 'D' types swept the opposition before them in their howling passage.
Will we see such days again?
J. Henry, Cadogan Gardens, London SW3

The rumour you heard probably relates to Jaguar's recent release of details of the Jaguar racing car that almost was. Designed by the late Malcolm Sayer who was responsible for the world beating 'D' type and code named XJ13, it was built in 1965 as a racing prototype and only now; after the project has been shelved and the car dismantled, has the company released this picture. When the car was first designed, Jaguar were considering returning to international racing but by the time the first car had been completed and tested, the idea was rejected. The engine was the four cam forerunner of the production vee-12 used in the series 3 E-type with a capacity of 4,991 and using Lucas fuel injection to produce 502 bhp at 7,600 rpm. The gearbox was a ZF five-speed as fitted to the Ford GT40.
Though it never raced, the XJ13 set the fastest circuit lap ever recorded in Britain – 161.6 mph on the banked circuit at MIRA driven by ex-Jaguar apprentice, David Hobbs.

After six months with a sports car I've changed back to a medium size saloon – on the advice of the chicks! And I must admit I'm having four times the success with the saloon.
Why? Well, the truth about the pulling power of cars was brought home to me by a dolly young chick in my local. She says, most girls look upon guys in flashy sports cars as little more than gigolos – I find the connotations less obvious, myself.
She also pointed out that saloon cars are more comfortable, roomier and don't let the weather in. She admitted that when a guy gave her a lift home in his car she knew what was going to happen and she preferred the space and comfort of a four seater. She claimed it was uncomfortable and almost frustrating in a sports car and gave her hysterics.
More recently I've been parked outside a dance hall and seen guys in saloons having no trouble offering lifts to the girls while the chap in the shiny white E-type went home alone. It seems that a sports car is an ego extension, even a prop, and the owner projects both his deficiency and his need. He's out on the prowl looking for it. Why else would he drive one?
J.S., Kenway Road, London SW5 (full name withheld)

Your views and comments are welcome. Write to 'Letters', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2A 1DZ



'SMERSH thinks of everything, Lenina – even a dead letter box already!'

don't look now but...
ARE YOUR SPIES UNDONE?

At any time secret agents can find themselves compromised. Roy Raymonde examines their unofficial secret acts

'The fool of an Englishman has revealed all. *The final thrust will be at 6.00 hours, followed by a slow withdrawal of the wounded – then mopping up operations and something called "char und wads" . . .'*

'Relax, mam'selle. I am about to demonstrate Mr Morse's new code – nice long strokes for dashes and short ones for dots.'

'This is it, Madeleine – I have orders to break through the net tonight.*'*

'Well if it does turn out to be a bugging device, Roger – you'd better report it to the Family Planning Clinic.'

'. . . and what, Mr Bond, makes you so positive I'm Pussy Galore?'

'Lenin's Truss, Alexandrov! Isn't there any other *way of heating the invisible ink?'*

'Tell me more about this massive uprising, Mein brave Colonel.'

'I don't want to worry you, Olga – but I think I blew my cover on the last job.'

BOOKS

Arthur Pottersman

On the general principle that you can't have too much of a really good thing, there should be a whole lot going for a communal marriage. Or as one of the husband's in Henry Sackerman's novel, **The Westbank Group** (Sphere, 35p) puts it: 'The family that depraves together, stays together. Take off your clothes, honey.'

The essential ingredients are not hard to imagine. First – the special bedroom, built around a custom-made bed about the size of two king-sized beds with special super-large linen and blankets, and adjoining a special shower-room that several people can bathe in at once.

And then it also takes seven people (the ideal number) – three girls and four fellows. That way the household is male-dominated (which all group-thinking damsels ought to prefer) and there's still enough going for everybody to get a piece.

'I cupped my hands around her breasts while I kissed her, and as her arms encircled my neck she wrapped her silk-smooth legs around my waist; her dress had slid up around her squirming hips. She presently removed her left arm from my neck and put it around Paul's waist – he was sitting wtih his back towards us – and I didn't have to guess very hard to know what interesting things her hand was doing to him . . . He stretched his long body out full length beside us, throwing one arm and one leg over us possessively, suddenly impatient.

When we had both had her we remained where we were, sleepy, contented, in a warm, sweaty tangle.'

The advantages of a group marriage are not hard to find. Both men and women have their needs for sexual variety answered, without any accumulation of adulterous guilt. None of the individuals involved have to depend on the sexual whims of a single partner. The death or desertion of one marriage mate does not automatically lead to the break-up of the home. The children, if any, are unlikely ever to experience 'broken home' deprivation. Individuals can indulge their personal interests – like fishing or sport – secure in the knowledge that their wives are snug and cared-for . . .

Emotionally, too, there are big pluses. The novel's male narrator describes, graphically, how his spouses instantly come to the rescue whenever any kind of gloom threatens to settle:

'There was a concerted rush, and suddenly I was being tenderly crushed by four half-naked bodies, two male, two female, eight arms encircling me, holding me captive; Nada and Carol were kissing me, running their fingers through my hair. Bill managed to get hold of my shoulders and began massaging them. Paul zipped open my shorts and pulled them down, then guided Carol's hand down to my penis. "We all love you, you stupid shit," he said, patting my ass. They kept it up for half an hour, and it ended with their giving me a bath, all four of them crowding into the shower with me. By the time they finally got through with me, I was laughing and trying to get them all into my arms at the same time, and it ended when, slippery with soap, hands sliding constantly between my legs – they'd made it into a kind of grabbing contest – I came, after which they washed me and themselves off, and we dried each other, kissed each other.'

Jealousy (it's hard to lose the acquired feelings and habits of over 20 years in an instant) is given similar treatment:

'Nada's hand, caressing my stomach lightly, lasciviously, wandered gradually lower. I lay unresisting, drowning in a sea of suddenly confused emotions, not wanting to get aroused, not wanting to be vanquished so easily; but her soft, determined fingers were irresistible. Bill's hand was kneading my shoulder and my upper arm, but after a minute he transferred his hand to my thigh, which was more comfortable for him, and he kept it there until, finally, I pulled Nada over on top of me in a sudden excess of blinding desire. Bill reached up between my legs and guided me into her, probably the most intimate gesture of friendship it is possible to imagine; then he snaked his hand away and left her to me, but not moving his body away from us, understanding and believing the importance of unity. His hip pressed against mine, warm and sweaty, while I lunged up into Nada.

In order to bring numbers up to ideal strength, different techniques have to be employed. Potential recruits are invariably shocked at the idea of joining what seems to be a permanent group grope. But just as invariably those who are invited to give it a trial stay permanently persuaded by the experience.

You'd think that group marriage spoils a man – or woman, for that matter – for sexual encounters in any bed with a smaller population.

'Nada had slid her hand inside Bill's shirt and was doing whatever a girl does when she puts her hand inside her lover's shirt. Her head was nestled in the hollow of his shoulder and his right arm was holding her tightly, while he meanwhile was passionately kissing Carol whose hand was caressing his thigh . . . While Nada and Carol teased, kissed and caressed him lingeringly in the vicinity of his throat, his hair, his chest, his stomach and his groin, Paul and I massaged his legs, sliding our hands high up inside his thighs and toward his crotch. It was more than any human being could stand, and it was only minutes before Bill was panting and squirming, his one immediate, flaming desire to sink himself to the hilt into one of those two inviting, tantalizing females. But neither of the girls would let him yet; it was a kind of sex torture designed to stimulate him almost beyond endurance. Unfortunately it was stimulating me as well – and Paul, too – and it required an act of positively gigantic self-control for us not to shove him out of the way and leap onto the girls ourselves . . .

'Just before we thought Bill was desperate enough to attempt to kill Paul and me and rape both the girls, we went into our prearranged act. Paul lay down on the bed, comfortably, with a couple of pillows under his head . . . Carol stretched right on top of

Above: One of the 36 half-tone illustrations to be found inside the covers of The Passions and Lechery of Catherine The Great (Charles Skilton £4) which explores the sexual myths surrounding the 'little mother' who at 64 took a 20-year-old Captain to her divan 'not only to appreciate his value as a conversationalist' him, face up, using his chest for a pillow. I guided Bill on top of her – he didn't require any strenuous urging – and Nada and I stretched out on either side of them so that he was held in position by Paul's arms, Carol's arms, Nada's arms and mine – imprisoned, you might say, but he was in no mood to attempt a jail break. He was surrounded all right! Right in the hot, boiling centre of a mass of sweat-slippery, panting, gasping, straining, writhing, twisting, squirming naked young flesh so that it was hard for him to be quite sure who was who.

The persuasion technique for girls is somewhat different. When it becomes time to 'marry' a third wife, a 20 year old chick with a beautiful body, named Pat, a differently styled feast of flesh was put on the menu.

'Ordering Pat to keep her blindfold on, Paul, Bill and I lifted her up in our arms and carried her upstairs. It wasn't until we had gently deposited her on our communal bed that we removed her blindfold. Not a word was said, nor did Pat seem inclined toward conversation. She was understandably a little frightened and clung to Paul as though for protection, her rich, soft auburn hair cascading over his chest, his arms encircling her. Bill, stretching out besides them, had taken one of her taught, nipple-erect breasts into his mouth, one hand flat on her lovely, firm stomach, while I placed myself carefully above them, straddling the three bodies and kissed her throat.

'I could feel the increased rapidity of her heartbeat, the growing tension of her body, the slight involuntary surging of her hips as my fingers worked their way inside her. She seemed ready, and Paul felt this too, for he put his hand on my back and pressed down, a signal to go ahead. In our entwined, humid closeness, Bill too understood, and he hooked his left leg around hers and pulled it toward him, helping to open her to me.

'She put up only a small token resistance in deference to our need for a more total sense of male conquest, but not enough to let us think she was being raped. Paul's legs had captured her other one, and this was very beautiful, for she had to know that the three of us were as one; and finally, when she was wide open and moistily ready to receive me, I guided myself into her, my arms embracing all three of them. Her body arched up against me, holding me strongly in a smooth silken vice and she moaned and whimpered while she adjusted her own spasmodic thrusting to mine. I did not withdraw immediately, for I sensed her need for tenderness by the way she clung to us. She was not satisfied, of course, and she made no protest when Bill (we had learned not to mind a wet desk) took my place between her open thighs.'

With sensations like that to compete with, the age of monogamy seems over, indeed. Yet the novel's male narrator finally confesses that he and one of the group's wives fall into a personal love that has to exclude the rest of their family, and in this most permissive of societies they actually 'elope.' Monogamy – no! Romance – yes!

FILMS

David Quinlan

I'm sure the makers of **Once and For Always** (AA) could sell their film far better by calling it **'Sex in the Sun'**. But the ways of Wardour Street were ever strange, and this erotic little film comes out in its publicity as a sort of teenage *Love Story*.

A handsome hippie (Alessio Orano) and a physically mature girl of 15 (the dishy Ornella Muti) – misunderstood, of course, by her parents – set out on a cruise to a deserted Mediterranean island in the sun. Though the girl has been restricted by her parents and, by the look of it, the squashy bra she wears, love sets in early, and before long the virgin is moistening her lips and asking to be kissed.

Arrival at the island necessitates swimming ashore. Afraid to undress, the girl shivers in a dark cave for a few moments, before giving him her dress to dry. After some hesitation, there's a very erotic minute as she slowly takes off her bra and tosses it out, releasing her long, sloping breasts to silhouette freely against the daylight.

The removal of her bra seems to make her less reluctant to shed her briefs; but she hides for a while longer, before her desires overcome her shyness and she races to the sea, where the couple perform what might be termed an erotic underwater ballet.

All this is very idyllic, but any aspirations to the level of *Un Homme et Une Femme* are firmly negated by the dialogue (dubbed I fear), a snatch of which runs: 'You know, Robert I never met anyone like you.' 'Oh, I'm just a bastard.' 'Oh – you mean illegitimate.' 'No, I didn't mean literally. But my parents *are* divorced.' The photography is pretty, like the people, but almost every time they open their mouths, an embarrassing line pops out.

By the time the girl is ready to be laid, the entire navy rescue service is on the look-out for them, and their would-be *coitus* is *interruptus* in the grand style. But the girl's father is more concerned that his shapely daughter is still a virgin than in getting her back. And a tragic ending is obvious always.

A jaunty, earthy ballad sung by the Scaffold introduces us to the world of **Burke and Hare** (X). The producers of the film have turned it into a kind of One-Body-on-Top-of-the-Other, by coupling the story of the famous bodysnatchers with a parallel tale of a brothel, frequented by the students of Dr Knox, to whom the bodies are sold.

This is the cue for numerous kinky goings-on which involve nude girls being whipped, made to eat dog biscuits and bark, or dress up as headmistresses and Russian tsarinas. Anything for an erection – or the box-office.

Eventually Burke (Derren Nesbitt) comes into contact with two of the girls (Françoise Pascal, Yutte Stensgaard) and takes them home with him, there to strip them and chuck their well-shaped breasts. Alas, he soons finds their flesh desirable in more ways than the one he first thought of.

Derren Nesbitt attempts a

turn to page 18

Today any number – and any sex – can play. A still from America's Naked Under Satin (X) due here soon

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M 73

Films *continued from page 15*

variable but passable Irish accent as Burke, while Glynn Edwards is sensibly more unfathomable as Hare. The surface of the film is glossy in an old-fashioned Universal-International/Tony Curtis sort of way; but it must have been difficult to know in what spirit to attempt the story when confronted with such a rollickingly funny theme song. The result is that the film, though it tries, never quite matches that mood – though entertaining it remains to the end.

A midnight murder. Girls with great sprouting breasts. Faces torn directly from *Thunderbirds* and a script to match. It has to be a Russ Meyer film and it is. Though not as far-out as *Beyond the Valley of the Dolls*, its successor, **The Seven Minutes** (X) has more than enough to offer the Meyer connoisseur: a tortuous plot that one is far too busy watching the girls to follow; dialogue taken at the gallop; and a story about the prosecution of a could-be obscene book that gives Meyer ample opportunity for some heavy-breathing interludes.

The hero, Wane Maunder, is rather good. Yvonne De Carlo sweeps imperiously through her role as a vintage film star. And a succession of half-forgotten film faces – Jay C. Flippen, Lyle Bettger, Phil Carey, Charles Drake – almost distracts one from Meyer lovelies like Mora Gray, striking their statuesque poses with wild relish. One could almost write the last half-hour by oneself, but still a rather splendid time is had by all.

NIGHTLIFE

Kenneth Dowd

All the world loves a success story, and it is possibly all the more pleasant when you can eat it, which is exactly the situation at the most successful of the new London hamburger eating-houses, aptly named **The Great American Success,** at 100 Kensington High Street. Hamburger houses have progressed rapidly from the opening of the first one (no connection with The Great American Success), which was called The Great American Disaster. It was the great English disaster for me, and looking at the notes I made at the time a year or so ago, one sees that the tables were sticky and rocky; the chairs uncomfortable and very cramped; the iced water was served in dirty glasses; the cutlery was smeared and grimy; and it was impossible to keep the coffee in the saucers, never mind the cups, due to the afore-mentioned unstable table. There was also little space to hang the forty dripping raincoats which had accumulated, if you could get them off your back in the confined space anyway. Against all this criticism however, The Great American Disaster survived and flourished, through the undisputed quality of their hamburger meat and the indisputably reasonable prices which were charged. Also, they learned as they went along, and the newest Great American Disaster in Beauchamp Place, Kensington, has remedied all these earlier faults.

Which brings us back to The Great American Success in Kensington High Street. Here, cleanliness is the order of the day and the only spots I saw were set into the ceiling in elaborate electrified channels, illuminating the pop-art pictures on the walls and producing a wonderful shimmering effect on the green velvet hotpants which the dolly-waitresses wear. They also wear T-shirts, which are in fact for sale (though not off their backs, of course.)

The Great American Success is a success for several reasons: the 'Lunarburger' contains half-a-pound of steak and is sold to you with French fries or jacket potato and a salad, for 70p only; the Bordeaux Superieur red wine is priced at only £1; the spotlessly clean red-and-white decor; the Artemide lighting; the high-quality Dortmunder-Union German beer and the generous space between tables all add up to make the right combination for success.

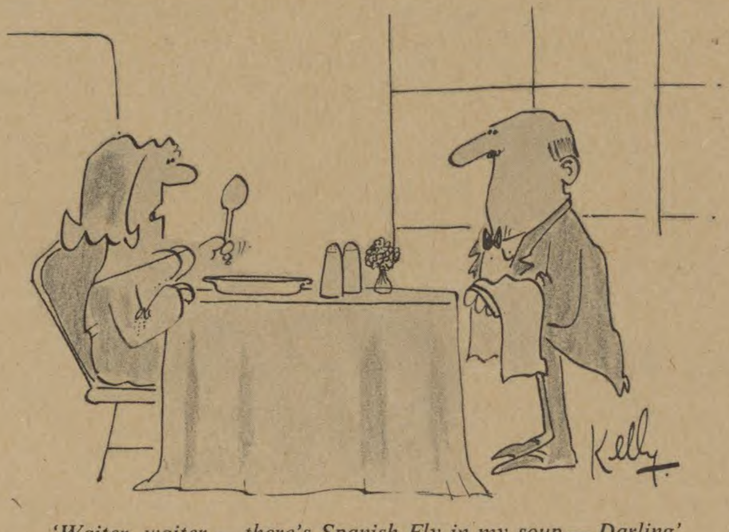
The owners, Sohrab Eshragi and Hossein Salmassian, two Persian nationals, already have plans for similar hamburger houses in Paris, Stockholm, and Munich. They are about to open a further steak room, The Shrinking Dollar, above The Great American Success, and we will let you know in due course how this T-bone plus disco plus American bar combination measures up to the standards which have already been achieved below.

While on the subject of hamburger houses, it would be unfair to conclude an article without mention of the **Hard Rock Cafe** at Old Park Lane, Hyde Park Corner, which is extraordinarily noisy but obviously right for the clientele; **Yours Faithfully** in the Old Brompton Road, which has recently had a decorative facelift and is one of the very best hamburger houses at present; and **Stax** in the Kings Road, which we have of course already told you about in an earlier issue, and which is at present making a name for itself with delicious spare-ribs.

Since it is our policy to keep the Mayfair reader abreast of the latest developments in the entertainment field, I cannot wait to give you the address of the first restaurant which we have found where they will actually supply you with a 'hubble-bubble' pipe, to transport you into a state of euphoria after your meal. The address of the **Tandoori Ashoka** is 153 Fulham Road, SW3, and a very adequate Indian meal may be enjoyed here. Most of the chicken and meat dishes cost about 75p, which is not expensive and, of course, the Tandoori oven imparts its own delicious flavour to the meats, fowl and lobster. There is also a good selection of kebabs and a wide choice of Indian vegetables and rice dishes.

The decor of the restaurant is exotic to say the least, and in fact the whole mystical procedure culminating in an ice-cream covered with silver paper, which you are expected to eat (it does not make you ill, I found), and a final chew on a betel leaf called paan before you settle down to half-an-hour on the Indian hubble-bubble pipe, should convince whoever you are with that they could well be in the company of the next James Bond.

The Tandoori Ashoka has several other surprises in store for you, including the price – there is a table d'hote lunch for 85p, and you can dine well in the evening for about £2 a head including wine. If you go often, we are bound to meet.



'Waiter, waiter — there's Spanish Fly in my soup — Darling'

ANNE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY JIM BUNKER

Was there ever such a mistress as Anne for you – back in those cobweb days of blackboards and school milk, text books and gym lessons? Looking at this 27-year-old teacher with a degree to her name, we felt uneasy, cheating, as we saw those breasts smashed gently against a counterpane and felt the old fantasies re-kindled by such ample and voluptuous proof that the unapproachable teacher is as warm, loving and flagrant as any woman. Anne has come from Yorkshire. She gradu-

ated from Leeds University in 1965 with an Honours degree in English and History. Then Anne came south to teach at schools in Reading and Sunbury. She told us: 'At one of the schools I was always being mistaken for a pupil at the Christmas inter-school dance. A lot of the boys used to try to kiss me under the mistletoe. Then they'd be very embarrassed when they were told I was a member of the staff. I didn't mind, though.' Did she ever fancy any of her pupils? we asked, curious. She taught a mixed class History, Geography, English and games. 'It would have been very easy to. Some of the sixth formers were really very dishy.' Did they ever try anything? A pause. Did they? we repeat. 'No, no they didn't. Well, not really. There was this master once . . .' she stops, she won't go on. Teachers' rule. Anne describes herself as a tom-boy. She takes her 36–26–36 sailing and hiking in fine weather. But when it comes to punishment – and a few other things besides – she's woman soft and prefers to caress than to strike. 'Once I worked at a school where I was told I could use the cane – but I never did. I found that just a rap on the desk was enough. Sometimes I wanted to use the cane – on girls as well as boys. A quick clip on the ear is very often enough, though.'

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CUT-THROAT COMPETITIONS

Ivor Smullen on the era of the great shaving contests

MODEL MADE AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY JON MILTON

Lurking somewhere is a statistic proving that the average man shaves each morning in the space of 4.1 minutes. I have no documentary evidence of this, but even the smart alecs among you will not dispute that this figure, give or take a milli-second, is reasonably accurate. The point I am trying to make is that we should all be pretty contrite about our performances. For, if you think of all the human activities which have gained in speed over the past century – from travel to potato-peeling – you come to the disconcerting revelation that shaving is not among them.

In the era of fast-shaving contests a shave was generally perpetrated in a matter of seconds. Your glistening electric shaver is thus of no account. A nothing.

The fast-shaving mania was one symptom of the still-extant barbers' itch for record-breaking. It afflicted barbers on both

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CUT-THROAT COMPETITIONS

continued from page 25

sides of the Atlantic in the late Victorian era and burst upon the scene again in the nineteen-twenties. For inconsequentiality it was on a par with such later diversions as pole-squatting and marathon piano-playing. For excitement engendered, it matched an Alfred Hitchcock première or a space rocket-launch.

When the barbers of St Louis were disputing the title of fastest shaver in town back in 1883 a reporter found them all stropping their razors at wrist-spraining speed and chattering 'about nothing else except how fast different members of the fraternity can get over a man's face.'

The British pioneer of fast-shaving contests was probably an undersized Chelsea barber named Teddy Wick, who in 1887 set the ball rolling by shaving 77 men in 59 mins 53 secs to win a £15 bet.

The importance attached to the proceedings may be gauged from the presence of a champion skittle-player as referee, an ex-champion roller-skater as timekeeper, and a Mr J Markey, known as The Champion Barber of Fulham, as official latherer.

Afterwards Wick was delirious with joy and in a megalomanic statement issued a challenge to barbers all over the world. Anyone they could shave, he could shave faster.

His euphoria lasted a month, at the end of which his record was smashed by his brother-in-law, James Rymer, a Stepney barber, who invited his customers to a Free Shaving Competition, in the course of which he 'did' 100 men in 48 mins 40 secs, beating Wick by 23 men with 11 mins 13 secs to spare. No blood, said a contemporary report, was shed.

A week later, however, the resilient Wick was back in the fight, matching himself, in a stage performance at the Westminster Aquarium, against Mr Markey. Wick was inaccurately introduced to the audience as The Champion Barber ('commonly known as *multum in parvo*') while young Markey was described as 'a foeman worthy of his steel.' Both men used safety razors.

Wick scored 11 men and Markey 9 in just over five minutes, the barbers running from chair to chair preceded by their latherers, and each seat being refilled as soon as it was vacated. As an encore Wick, somewhat more slowly, shaved three men blindfold.

None of them proved any the worse for the experience. A reporter from the *Hairdressers' Chronicle*, however, found the proceedings, 'notwithstanding the skill exhibited, a trifle dull, and, from a spectacular point of view, common-place.'

Nevertheless, the match was continued the following Saturday, when Wick won 58–51, reaching a speed of 300 mph.* An exhilarated audience, clearly not sharing the tedium of the trade journal reporter, carried Wick shoulder-high through the building amid deafening cheers. Wick reciprocated by treating them to his *tour de force*: shaving one man with a razor from which the handle had been removed. In the world of show business, it was now obvious, barbers were a power to be reckoned with. The following year a music-hall programme announced:—

'In addition to the Powerful Company already engaged there will be A HAIR-CUTTING CONTEST for a Silver Cup, for Hairdressers of the Neighbourhood. The Cup will be presented to the person who cuts a head of hair the best and neatest (military style) in four minutes. The judges will not see the men at work, but will judge after the four minutes . . .

'Professor Francis, the Barber's Champion Haircutter and Banjoist, will undertake to cut three heads of hair (military style) in ten minutes for a wager of £10.'

Meanwhile the Hull Master Hairdressers' Association passed a resolution deploring shaving competitions for stakes, the barbers 'thus placing themselves in the hands of betting men.' Members also felt the contests lowered the standing of the trade in the eyes of the public.

A representative of an American shaving-soap company wrote to a trade journal that he was not surprised to learn that England held the championship for quick shaving. He found British barber-shops so uncomfortable it was not altogether astonishing that customers wanted to get out as quickly as possible. He believed, however, that shaving was 'a fine art' and that, all things considered, British barbers would be advised not to sacrifice quality for speed.

Teddy Wick, a compulsive publicity-seeker, was unimpressed. Six years after his first contest (apparently unperturbed by a decision to dispense with his services at a workhouse because of unspecified complaints) he was making arrangements for his next duel.

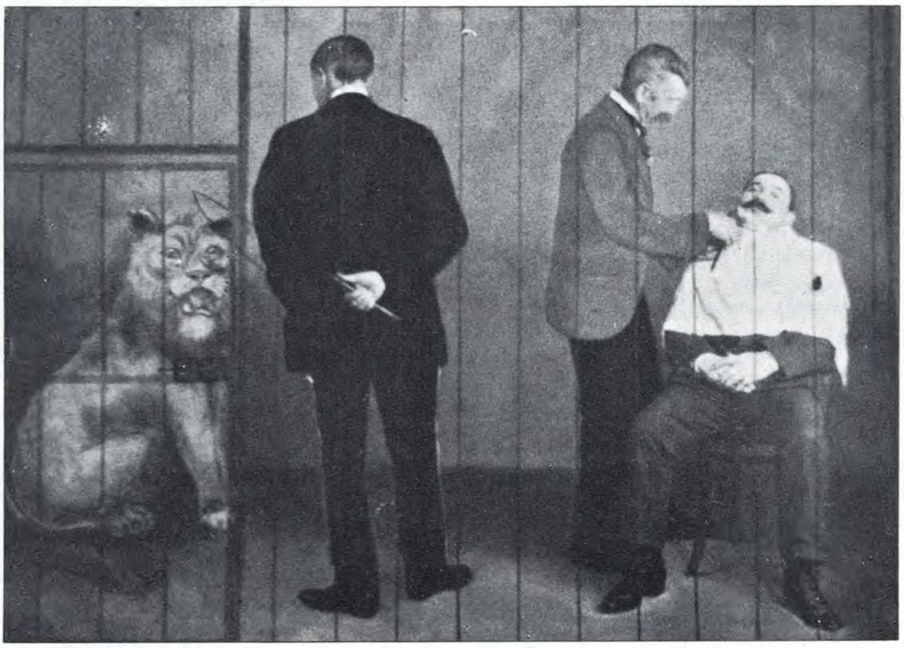
At a London police court he applied for and was granted a licence permitting his eight-year-old daughter to give an introductory entertainment before a fortnight-long shaving competition in which he was to take part in the Royal Aquarium. His own performance, he assured the magistrates, would have nothing demoralising in it. 'Not to the child, perhaps,' said one magistrate. 'You cannot speak of the effect upon others.'

Wick's opponent on this occasion (with the world championship at stake) was young Mr William Lloyd of Fulham Road. The battle was to take place on a stage lately vacated by a boxing kangaroo, with a forest sunset as backcloth. Facing the footlights were two rows of shaving chairs, and the referee sat at a table in the centre. The subjects to be shaved ('martyrs', one reporter called them) entered from the wings and deposited their tensed-up bodies in the chairs. (The general impression among the spectators, wrote the same reporter, was that some of these men would have benefited from a wash and brush-up as well as a shave.)

Enter little Nelly Wick in a short blue frock and blue socks, escorted by papa, who proudly informs the audience that she can 'do' 13 men in 10 mins, but on this occasion is only going to deal with five, the last two with one hand behind her back. Five men in the front row of chairs are now deftly napkinned and lathered by attendants, a blue-topped stool is placed close to the first chair on the right, Nelly perches thereon, razor in hand, and, at the starter's off, she sets to work. Her time is 6 mins 42 secs.

Now the referee introduces the competitors in the main bout of the evening: Wick, short, slim, dark-haired and sallow, in a white jacket and apron; and the younger Lloyd, stocky, fair-haired and ruddy-cheeked, in shirt-sleeves and waist-coat. The match, says the referee, is for £25 a side, with points for 'science and style.'

turn to page 34



'Professor' Stephens shaves a customer at the Bristol Coliseum in 1912 – in the lion's den

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******Men per hour*

CUT-THROAT COMPETITIONS

continued from page 27

Fresh victims march on-stage, to be briskly lathered to a piano accompaniment. A spectator suggests that an appropriate air would be *I'd Rather Lather Father Than Father Lather Me*. The contestants begin, and it soon becomes evident that, of the two, Wick is the more mercurial, Lloyd the more stolid. While Wick, the cavalier of the razor, makes bold, slashing sweeps, Lloyd adopts a more cautious approach. Many of the subjects walk off the stage bearing traces of the fray: dabs of lather in their ears and on their jaws (removed by ambulance men in attendance in the wings.)

There is a temporary hitch when the referee announces that Wick has brought more men along than Lloyd, who is now at a standstill for lack of material. It is suggested that Lloyd should use some of his rival's men. At the close of this first night's proceedings the count is 40 men for Wick (with one man deducted as 'the shave was not good enough to pass muster') and 31 men for Lloyd, whose work has been generally well done apart from two subjects who show slight scratches and are therefore deleted from the scoreboard.

To sustain the excitement at the end of the show, the referee announces that the Aquarium directors are to secure the attendance of a contingent of coalheavers 'with good crops of bristles' during the coming fortnight. (In the event, the subjects also included a number of well-known sporting characters, with a good sprinkling of unshaven journalists.)

Each evening's events are followed by a patient and meticulous reporter of *The Sporting Life*: Night No 2: The referee decides that the previous evening was too confused. The contestants, he now rules, will shave squads of 10 men each, alternately.

Lloyd wins the toss and opens, clearing off his first man in 36 seconds . . . Wick's first man is polished off in 21 seconds . . . Total times at end of evening: 20 shaves in 12 minutes 3 seconds by Wick (brought down to 19 shaves after one subject is challenged); 20 shaves in 13 minutes 10 seconds by Lloyd (who in turn loses two men, one for a scratch, the other for an unfair shave).

Night No 3: Wick beaten by 2 seconds. Sensation. Night No 4: Lloyd beats Wick by 7 seconds. Bedlem. Night No 5: Lloyd beats Wick by 34 seconds. Stupefaction. Night No 6: Both men show an 'electrical speed.' Wick is the faster, but sacrifices style to expedition, and, for the first time since the contest began, has more challenges for cuts, etc, than his rival. On the other hand, Lloyd's comparatively slow work is caused in great measure by the extraordinarily stiff beards.

Weekend break. Night No 7: Wick back in form, wins the day. Night No 8: Wick on top again. Night No 9: Lloyd's advantage. Night No 10: Six protests against Lloyd: three sustained. Three protests against Wick: three sustained. Night No 11: The usual 100 volunteers throng the stage, but only twenty have beards deemed 'worthy of shaving'. Three protests against each contestant sustained.

Second weekend break. Last night: To ensure a perfectly fair contest the referee enlists the help of Mr Joseph Szalay, not only one of the most expert barbers in the City, but a champion dumbbell lifter . . .

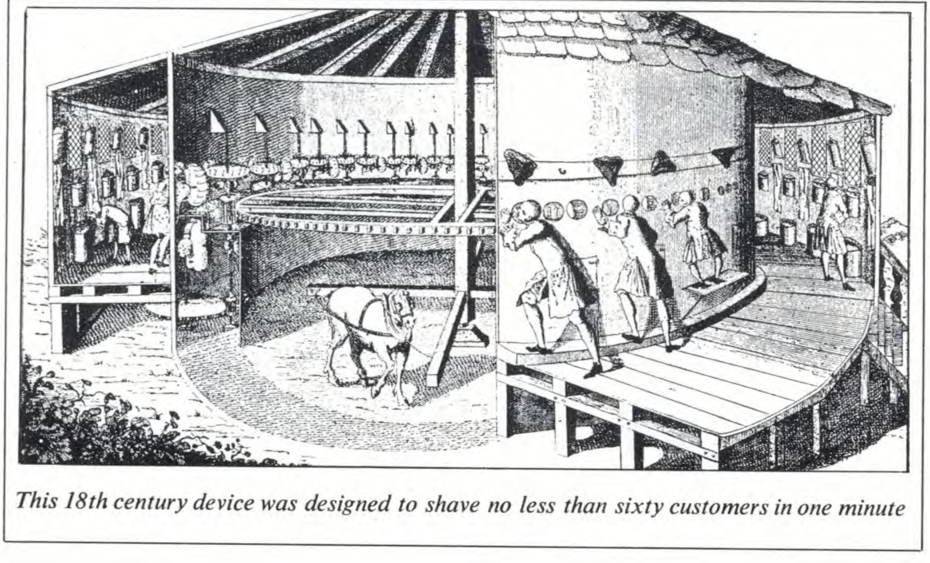
It's still close. Wick faster, but Lloyd's style earns him more points . . . LLOYD WINS CHAMPIONSHIP BY FOUR SECONDS! . . . Rapture.

In an interview afterwards Lloyd modestly attributes his success to the razor he has been using regularly for the past two years (a statement which, unhappily, brings the whole affair down to the level of a TV commercial).

As for Wick, it was not surprising to learn that in 1892 he reported that 'supernatural' racing tips were being whispered in his ear in the wee small hours. All were 50–1 long shots which came off.

At the turn of the century, Sydney Gleed, a London barber (recently mayor of a London borough), fought out a shaving marathon with a German barber in a Seven Kings saloon. The timekeeper was a St Paul's Cathedral chorister. Gleed won 53–47 and the vanquished German promptly slashed his strop in half and packed in his job that same night.

As late as 1932 a quick-shaving competition was held in a Blackburn, Lancashire, marquee, the winner completing a shave in 30 seconds (child's play in the light of Wick's and Lloyd's achievements), thus beating his brother by what was described as a hair's breadth and earning a silver medal. A story has been handed down to illustrate this man's proficiency. It seems that a customer had exactly nine minutes in which to have a shave and catch a train. Within two minutes the man was in and out of the saloon. Four more minutes saw him at the station. He caught his train with a minute to spare.



This 18th century device was designed to shave no less than sixty customers in one minute

What, however, is the explanation for it all? Perhaps barbers are propelled by some inner and illogical demon. Perhaps they subconsciously associate speed with professionalism. At all events, one Lancashire barber known as Tripe Bob used to charge a penny to shave at his own speed: tuppence if you asked him to slow down.

To learn the art of light pressure which must accompany speed, many apprentices of his day would skim blown-up, lathered balloons with a razor, while others practised on egg-shaped soda-water bottles. (There was no truth in a widely-spread rumour that some barbers rehearsed on sheeps' heads.)

Seventy years ago several British barbers found a novel method of displaying their shaving prowess. When a circus came to town one of their number would enter the lion's cage and shave the trainer. His reward was usually a sovereign. Charles Kirby, a Norwich barber who performed this feat in 1900, added a postcript by lathering the lioness's nose. He survived and was presented with a medal. The following year a Rhondda barber went one better by smoothing a lion's mane and 'kissing him on the lips.'

A Bristol barber, 'Professor' Charlie Stephens, braved a cageful of lions on the local football ground. As he busied himself with lather-brush and razor on a volunteer subject, the lady lion-tamer (with a revolver in one hand and a truncheon strapped to her other wrist) urged him to hurry up, as one of her charges was getting restless.

The man in the chair recently reminisced: 'When he had finished, the Professor made a bolt for the cage door. I was a close second with the lion-tamer on my heels. The lion came a close fourth.' Nonetheless he took the hat round for 'The Mad Barber' (as Stephens was affectionately known) and collected the princely sum of eighteen shillings and tuppence.

Stephens himself, incidentally, specialised in perilous undertakings. He parachuted out of a balloon, won a medal for diving off the Forth Bridge, and was awarded another for permitting a sword-thrower to split in two an apple tied to his own Adam's apple. He pinned the medals to the scarlet vest he wore when (with his hair dyed black to make him look younger than his 58 years) he crawled into a red barrel (the proud handiwork of the finest Bristol coopers) to ride the Niagara Falls. The barrel gathered speed and was lost in the thundering spray. The Professor, who had one arm tattooed 'Forget me not, Anne', was never seen again.

GREAT LOCO

The split-second crashing chaos of metal, wood and

An express train – weighing as much as 600 tons, doing over 80 mph – remains today the most potentially lethal mode of transport devised by man.

For that reason alone, it's hardly surprising that news of a rail crash should send a special sort of shiver down our spines. But there's more to it than that . . . Why should we find the thought of a crashing train more intrinsically unnerving than, say, a ship being lost at sea, a volcano erupting or an earthquake rocking a city?

The sheer humdrum *proximity* of a railway disaster contributes to its horror: not many of us travel regularly by plane or boat and certainly very few of us are ever likely to be at the receiving end of an earthquake or a volcano. But many of us are on and off trains every day of the week; we can scarcely avoid them. When an accident happens it is very much nearer to us, very much closer to the otherwise cushioned routine of our daily lives.

Train crashes almost always seem to happen in someone's back yard. The news photographs with the depressing, look-alike rears of those suburban houses just behind the wreckage firmly drop the disaster right in the middle of us. After an air crash, rarely do the 'bits' remain to be photographed; in a railway disaster the opposite is the case: the carriages lie frozen in the moment of horror, giving an icy literality to the phrase *stopped dead in their tracks.*

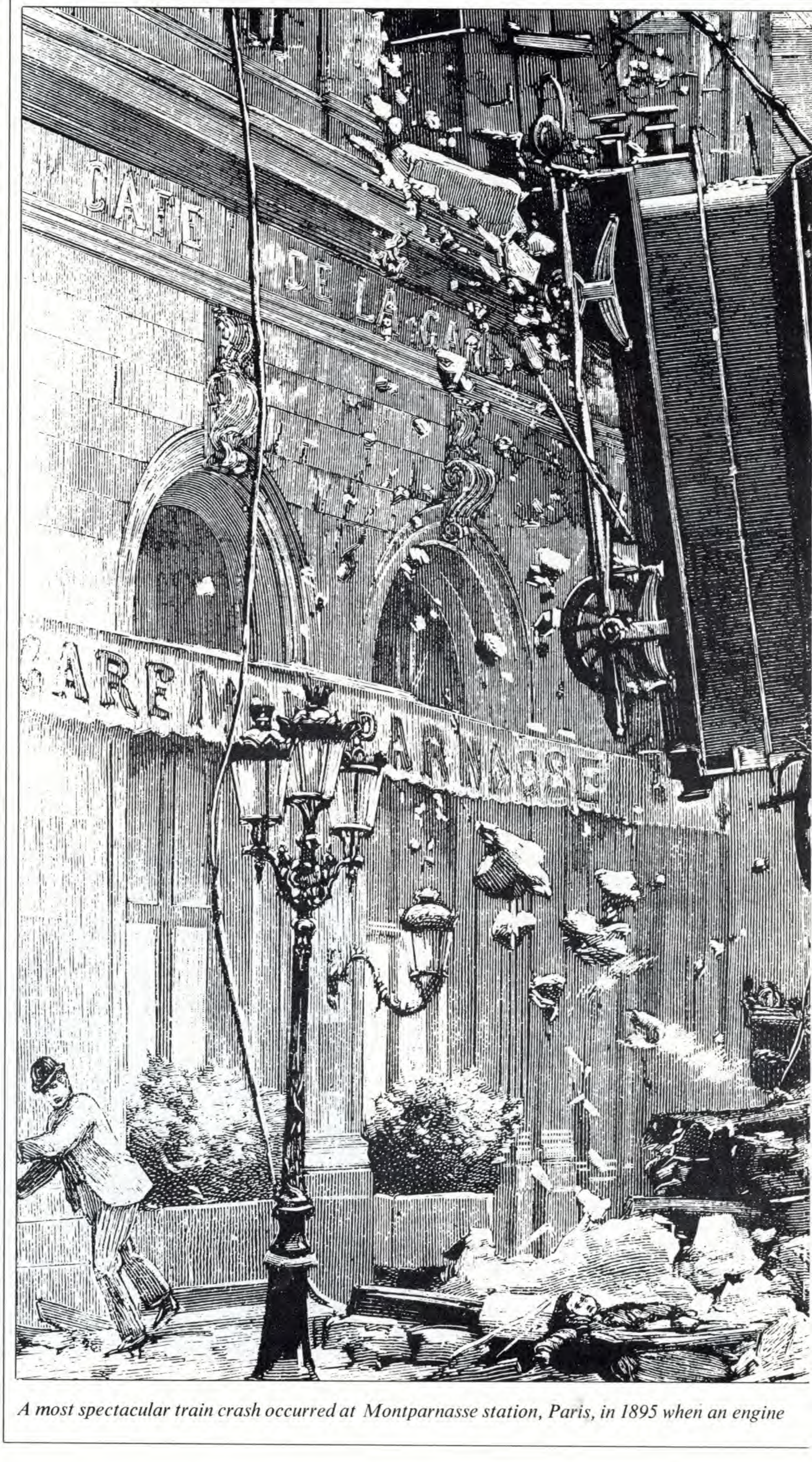
Today railway accidents are mercifully rare. In the early days of steam travel, however, mishaps were sometimes bizarre, often avoidable and, above all, frequent.

The oddly cavalier attitude displayed by the public to the new form of transport was in itself for a while a major source of danger. Passengers would treat railway carriages like stage coaches – trying to ride on the roof, attempting to retrieve lost hats by jumping out of the train while in motion; this last habit caused some companies quickly to decide it would be better to lock their passengers inside the carriages.

In 1830 William Huskisson, then President of the Board of Trade, became the railways' first victim. At the ceremonial opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway he stepped from his carriage to walk across the line and greet the Duke of Wellington, when he was run down by an engine and killed. Ironically, and almost symbolically, on the adjoining track was George Stephenson's famous 'Rocket'.

By far the major cause of accidents for many years, however, were primitive – almost non-existent – braking systems. For many years the only means of stopping most trains was a set of hand brakes with wooden blocks on the tender wheels. Even by mid-Victorian times locomotives were still being built without brakes of their own. By the early 1870s, for example, the Great Northern Railway was running the fastest passenger line in the world, sometimes reaching speeds of up to 70 mph. Yet the first thirteen Stirling engines specially built for the line had no brakes at all. Not until 1876 were these fitted with brakes.

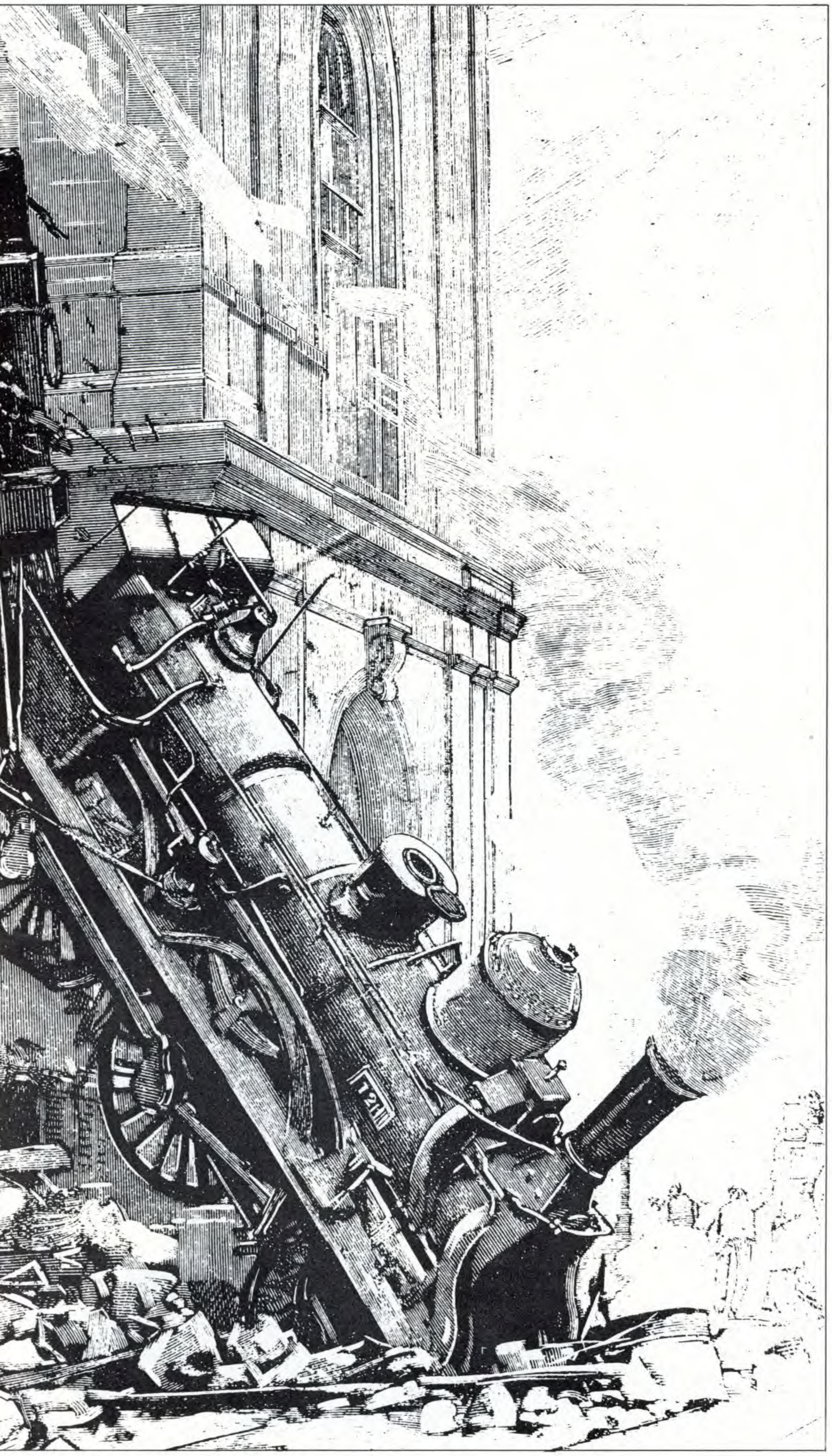
Second only to primitive brakes as a source



A most spectacular train crash occurred at Montparnasse station, Paris, in 1895 when an engine

COMMOTIONS

steam turn train disasters into special nightmares



shot through the buffers and fell to the street below. The one casualty was a woman newsvendor

of disaster were primitive signalling systems. Initially trains relied only on hand signals, given at various points along the journey. Then a system of signals given on a 'time basis' became widespread. Regardless of its extreme inefficiency – no allowance was made for fast trains in relation to slow trains or for trains that broke down between signals – the railway companies adhered stubbornly to this system for many years. To change to a 'space system,' or 'block working,' as it's known, would cause great congestion, they insisted.

Fierce competition between the various railway companies only made matters worse. Throughout the 19th Century the Board of Trade was urging them to improve their safety measures, but some companies would tolerate no government supervison whatsoever. The great Brunel, engineer of the Great Western Railway, was not altogether untypical when he told a Parliamentary Select Committee that Government inspectors would receive no cooperation from railway men, who could 'scarcely be expected to assist in shackling themselves' – although they would, he hoped, answer questions in a gentlemanly manner. Railway officials understood very well how to look after the public safety, said Brunel, and possessed more ability to find out what was necessary than any inspecting officer.

Inter-company rivalry between drivers was equally virulent and there were always the dare-devil few who would take unnecessary risks. Lack of regulated working hours also made for slack working – it was not altogether uncommon for drivers to fall asleep at their posts. After an accident in Sussex in 1861, for example, it transpired that a signalman had been doing a continuous 24-hour shift.

On top of all this, as lines proliferated systems of communication failed to keep pace, opening the door to possible confusion. If a train broke down, the highly dangerous habit was to send out a 'search party' in the form of another engine down the same line. In some areas the introduction of telegraph did little at first to lessen complications: on the Highland Railway, for example, it was not unusual for more than eight hundred telegrams to be sent out from Inverness in one day.

Such was the haphazard state of railway operating, it is only surprising that nothing which could be described as a major disaster happened until Christmas Eve of 1841. A regular Great Western goods train on its way from Paddington to Bristol ran into a great mound of earth dislodged by heavy rain from a cutting at Sonning. There were two third-class passenger carriages between the engine and the rest of the train – a parcels van and seventeen goods wagons. The sheer weight of the goods wagons on impact crushed the passenger carriages, killing eight people and injuring seventeen others. Most of the victims were men working on the new Houses of Parliament, on their way home for Christmas.

Despite Brunel's thunder, Acts of Parliament were passed empowering the Board of Trade to appoint railway inspecting officers, to be appointed – as they still are today – from among the Corps of Royal Engineers. The autocratic chairmen of the Victorian railway companies and their chief engineers greeted them with lightly veiled or open hostility.

Meanwhile technical deficiencies of one kind and another continued to cause accidents. One of the most absurd and unfortunate examples of this kind of thing happened in 1852 when an ashpan fell off the 9.15 am train on its way from Rugby to Birmingham. The leading van and the second-class coach behind it were derailed and fell into the path of a Leamington train near Hampton. Two passengers were killed as a result and several others injured.

But perhaps the most frequent – and spectacular – variety of technical hitch were exploding boilers. A general disregard of the immense destructive potential sealed up in the belly of a steam engine, coupled with inadequate inspection and maintenance, made this kind of accident a recurrent danger.

In 1864, for example, goods engine No 138 of the Great Northern Railway demolished the better part of Bishop's Road Station on the Metropolitan line. The station roof was blown off, a footbridge collapsed and a glass screen fell on the remains of the engine. A passenger in another train was injured but the driver of the engine, somehow, survived.

Earlier in the same month a Midland goods engine had exploded. This explosion was notable for the fact that an old lady lying in bed a quarter of a mile away was injured in the leg when a piece of plate fell through her roof.

After 1870, however, the railway companies had begun to have enough of exploding engines and their number began to decline steadily. Techniques of boiler manufacture were improved, safety valves really became *safety* valves and inspections became more frequent and thorough.

What was perhaps the most significant milestone in railway history was reached suddenly and tragically on an obscure branch line in Ireland on the morning of June 12, 1889.

A special Sunday School excursion train – fifteen coaches crammed with 940 passengers, about 600 of them children – pulled out of Armagh station to make its creaking way up the steady three-mile gradient to Dobbins Bridge summit and then on to Warrenpoint on the Carlingford Lough.

A few minutes earlier the driver, who had little experience of the line, had complained about the size of his load. He was expected to take it up gradients of 1 in 75 and 1 in 82. But, having made his protest, he got down to the job.

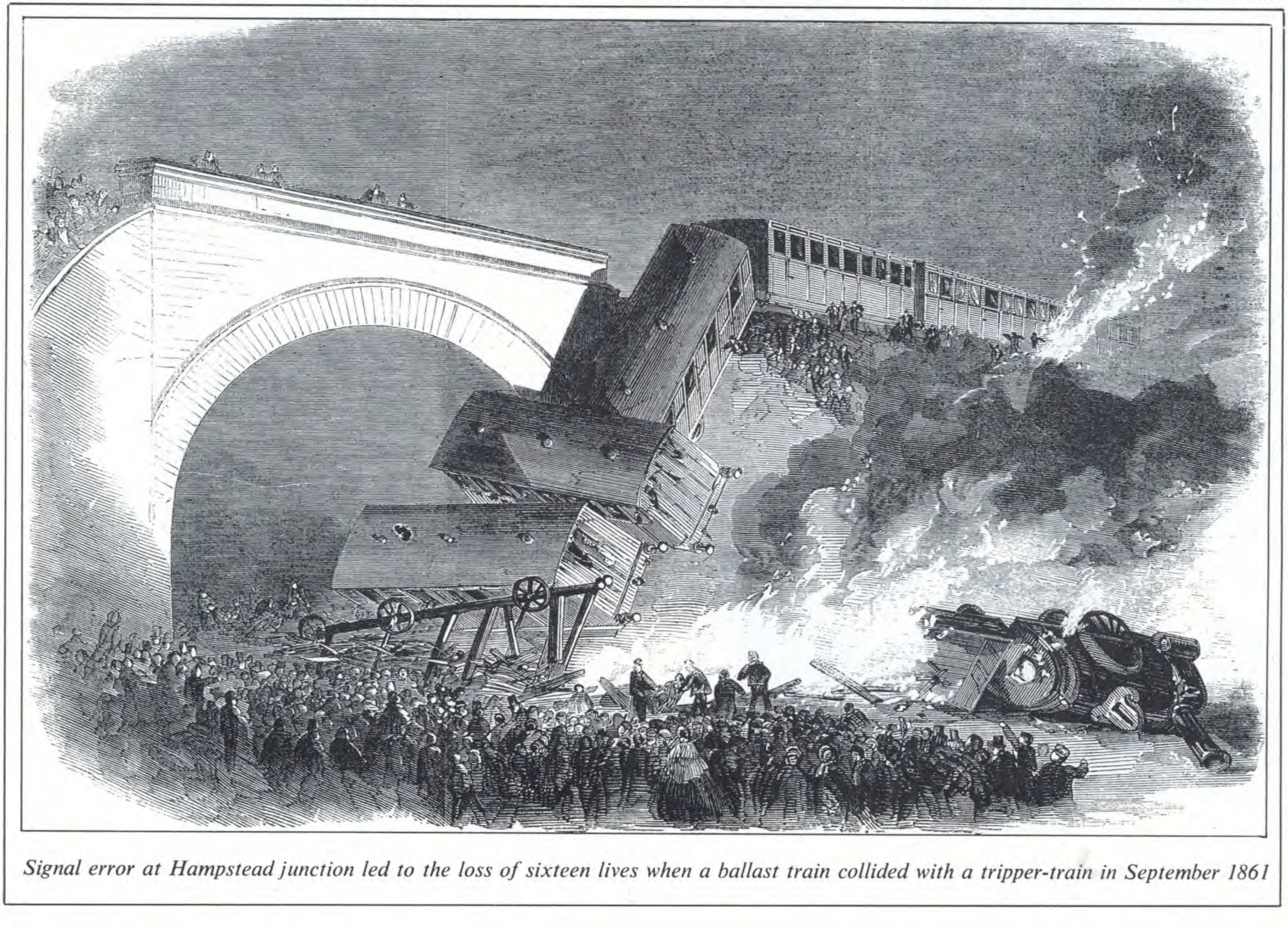
After going flat out, the engine was within sight of the Dobbins Bridge summit when it stalled. It was decided to divide the train: the engine would take the first five carriages to a siding on the other side of the summit and then return for the remaining ten. The rear guard – who, incidentally, was sharing his cabin with fifteen passengers – was instructed to screw down his brake and then to come and assist in piling stones under the wheels of the sixth carriage.

No sooner were the coaches uncoupled than the rear half of the train crunched eerily over the stones and began to trundle backwards down the hill with ever-increasing speed. 'We went so fast we could not see the hedges as we passed,' said the guard later. The passengers watched helpless and horror-struck as the train gathered speed. None except those in the guard's van were able to jump clear because – remember that hang-over from the days of the stage coach? – all the passengers had been locked in their compartments before the train left the station.

Meanwhile, the regular train – on this occasion very lightly laden – had left Armagh station and was steaming up the gradient at 30 mph. 'Hold! Hold! Hold!' the fireman screamed to the driver as he saw, to his horror, the excursion train hurtling down upon them. The driver had managed to shut off steam and reduce speed to about five miles an hour when the awful collision occurred.

The first three carriages of the excursion train were completely destroyed, their fragments scattered down the 40-foot embankment. The carriages behind piled horribly into one another and sideways. In all, 78 people lost their lives, many of them children, and 250 were injured.

This was Britain's worst railway disaster up to that time, and indeed today it is still the worst in Irish history. The public out-



Signal error at Hampstead junction led to the loss of sixteen lives when a ballast train collided with a tripper-train in September 1861 cry was, understandably, very considerable. Before the year was out Parliament had passed the Regulation of Railways Act at last compelling railway companies to introduce automatic continuous brakes to all passenger coaches, interlocking of all signals and points and complete block working.

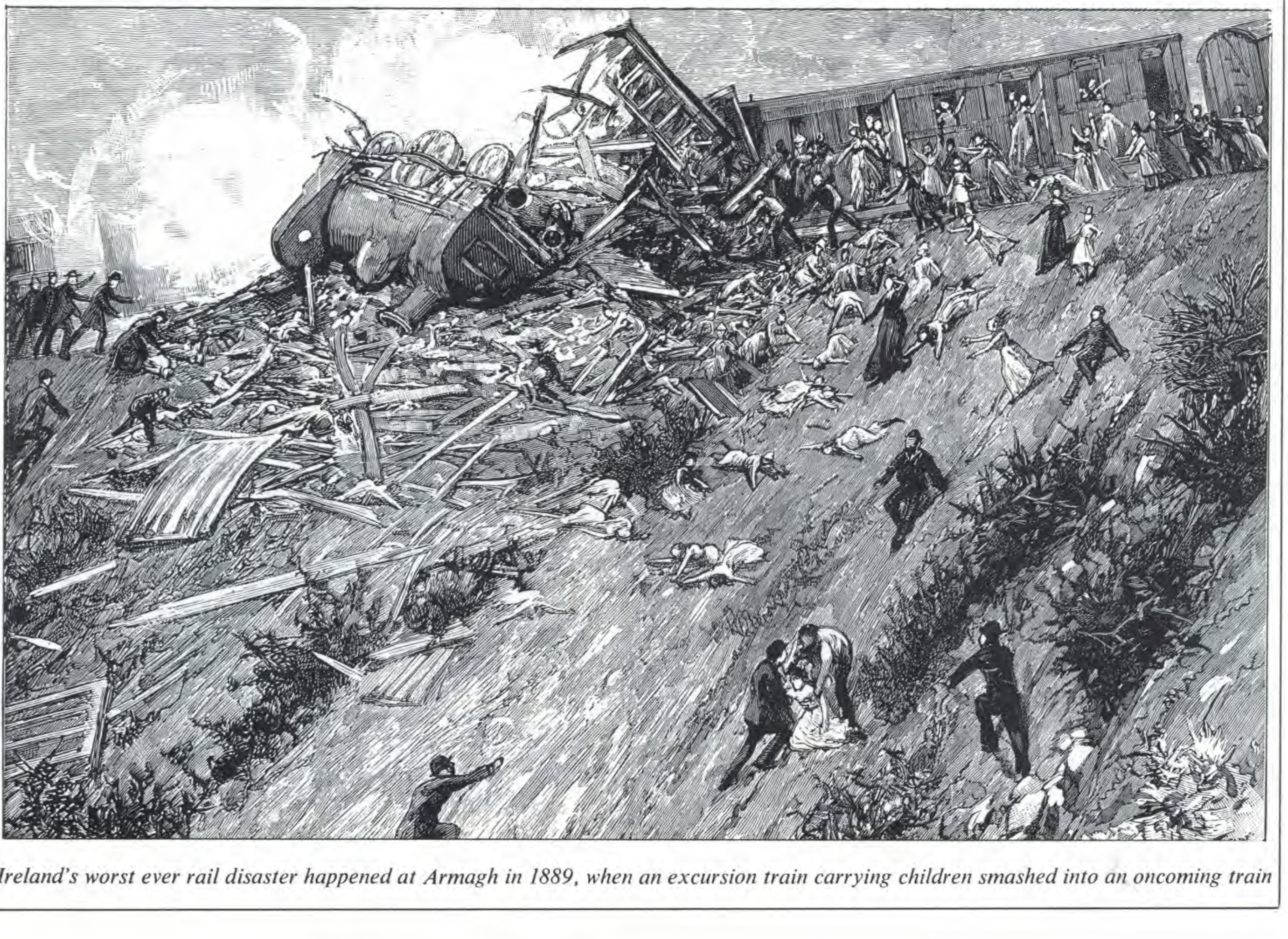
These measures were not sufficient, however, to prevent what is still today the worst railway disaster in British history.

The holocaust – for it was little short of that – happened in front of a signal box at Quintinshill, not far from Gretna Green, on the main line ten miles north of Carlisle. No fewer than five trains were involved in the disaster. The date: May 22, 1915.

Quintinshill has two sidings, one for the 'up' line and one for the 'down.' Around 6 am that morning two north-bound overnight expresses from Euston – one going to Edinburgh and Aberdeen, the other to Glasgow – were due to pass the box within a few minutes of each other. But both were half-an-hour late, a not altogether unusual state of affairs, and in this situation it was usual to allow a north-bound local train from Carlisle through ahead of them.

Manning the box was signalman George Meaking, who was due to come off duty at 6 am, to be relieved by his colleague James Tinsley. But Meakin and Tinsley had a private arrangement whereby if the London expresses were late they would ride up from Gretna on the footplate of the 'early' local, thereby snatching a few extra minutes in bed. It meant that whenever this happened

When this train fell 40 feet from the Bray Head bridge, Ireland, in 1867, two people died



Ireland's worst ever rail disaster happened at Armagh in 1889, when an excursion train carrying children smashed into an oncoming train the man coming on duty would be a few minutes late, but this irregularity would be covered up by the man waiting to be relieved writing train movements after 6 am down on a piece of paper, to be copied into the official book by his relief when he came in.

It was this arrangement which Tinsley followed on the fateful morning. Aside from the two expresses being late, it was this, coupled with amazing absent-mindedness, which led to the disaster.

Tinsley jumped off the footplate of the local train at Quintinshill to find a goods train already occupying one siding, so the local train was put on the 'up' main line. This had been done before, so there was nothing inherently dangerous in it if certain well-established safety precautions were complied with. However, it took until 6.33 am to perform the manoeuvre, just in time for the first of the expresses from Euston to pass through without incident.

Then a train of empty coal wagons came into the 'up' siding. Tinsley was by now busy copying his entries from the piece of paper into the book and failed to notify the next signal box north of the local train standing on the main line. So when this box offered a troop train special down to Quintinshill at 6.42 am, Tinsley – incredibly – accepted it, without even pausing to look out of the window, which would have been enough to make apparent the enormity of what he was doing. Meaking was still in the box, as too by now was the fireman of the local train.

Then, as if all this were not enough, the second of the two overnight expresses was offered to Quintinshill from Carlisle. Again Tinsley accepted it and pulled off all his down-line signals. To some celestial onlooker that little group of sidings at Quintinshill could well have looked like the chosen scene for some deliberate, preordained cataclysm. Southwards down a 1 in 200 gradient was speeding a crowded troop train at 70 mph, while across the Solway viaduct, trying to recover a little of its lateness, was the Euston 'sleeper' also doing nearly 70 mph. And at a point very near to where those two fast trains would pass each other there was a mighty obstruction!

The troop train came on at full speed under clear signals. The engine was a McIntosh superheater 4–4–0 No 121 with a load of 21 vehicles: four Great Central bogie coaches; 11 Great Central six-wheelers; five Caledonian six-wheeled vans and one Caledonian open scenery bogie truck. The special was conveying the 1/7th battalion of the Royal Scots.

This long variedly composed train collided head on, at almost full speed, with the standing 6.10 am local train which, with its brakes on, was an almost unmovable obstacle. The impact was terrible and the long train which had measured 213 yards overall was reduced to a heap of wreckage only 67 yards from end to end. The 4–4–0 engine virtually vanished in the collision. After the smash the great bogie tender of the local train was lying across the down line, to say nothing of the troop train engine and its tender a little distance beyond.

Less than a minute later the overnight express, with 10 bogie corridor vehicles, three 12-wheeled sleeping cars, drawn by two 4–4–0 engines of the 'Dunalastair' IV class – making a total of over 600 tons – was approaching.

It ploughed through the scattered wreckage of the wooden coaches of the troop train and then hit the tender of the local train. Its first three coaches telescoped as it came to a stop, with the local tender among the wagons of the goods train standing in the 'down' siding.

All the coaches of the troop train were gaslit and all the gas cylinders had been refilled just prior to its departure. Coals from the overturned engine ignited the gas as it escaped and fire spread with fearful speed. The Carlisle fire brigade arrived at 10 am but their efforts were to no avail. All that day and throughout the following night the holocaust blazed.

In the express eight died and fifty-four were injured; in the local train two were killed. As for the troop train, though the exact number of dead will never be known because the Battalion Roll was lost in the accident, it was estimated that 215 lost their lives and no fewer than 191 were injured. The survivors were paraded in a field adjacent to the line, and out of a battalion strength of 500 only 52 answered their names.

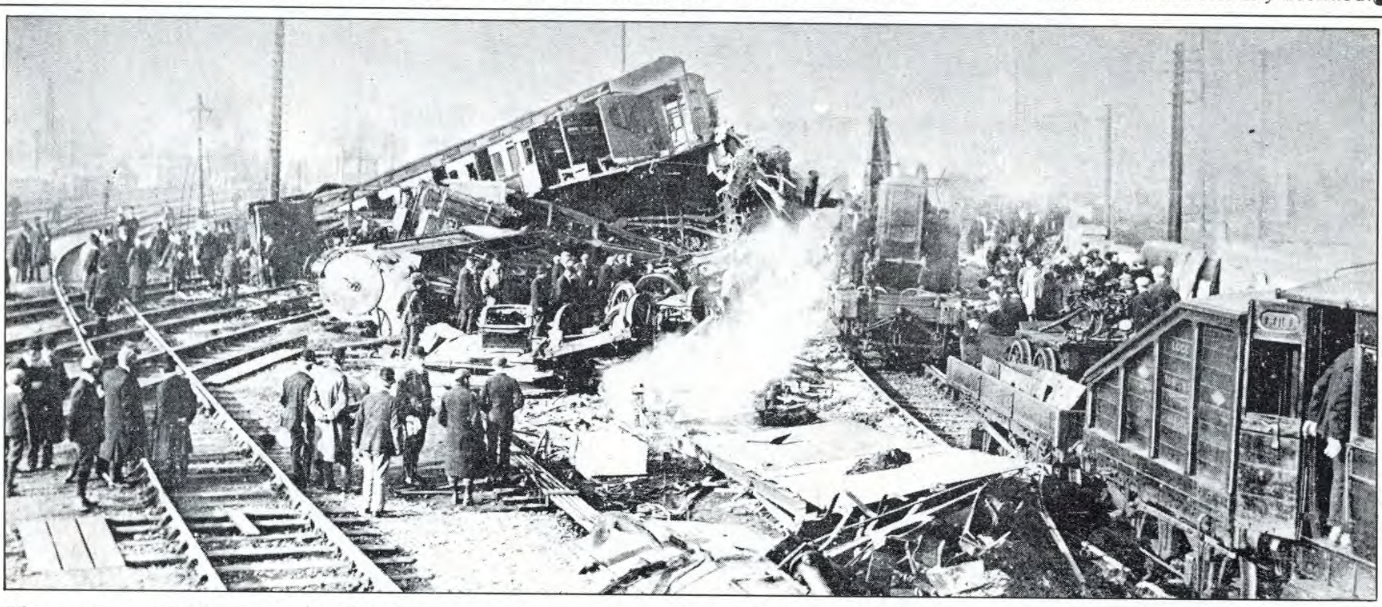
The total dead: 246. With justification did the *Railway Magazine* describe this as 'the blackest day in British railway history.'

The fate of another train being put to military purposes, this time in the Second World War, showed that even as late as 1944 there were still safety precautions and new regulations to be introduced.

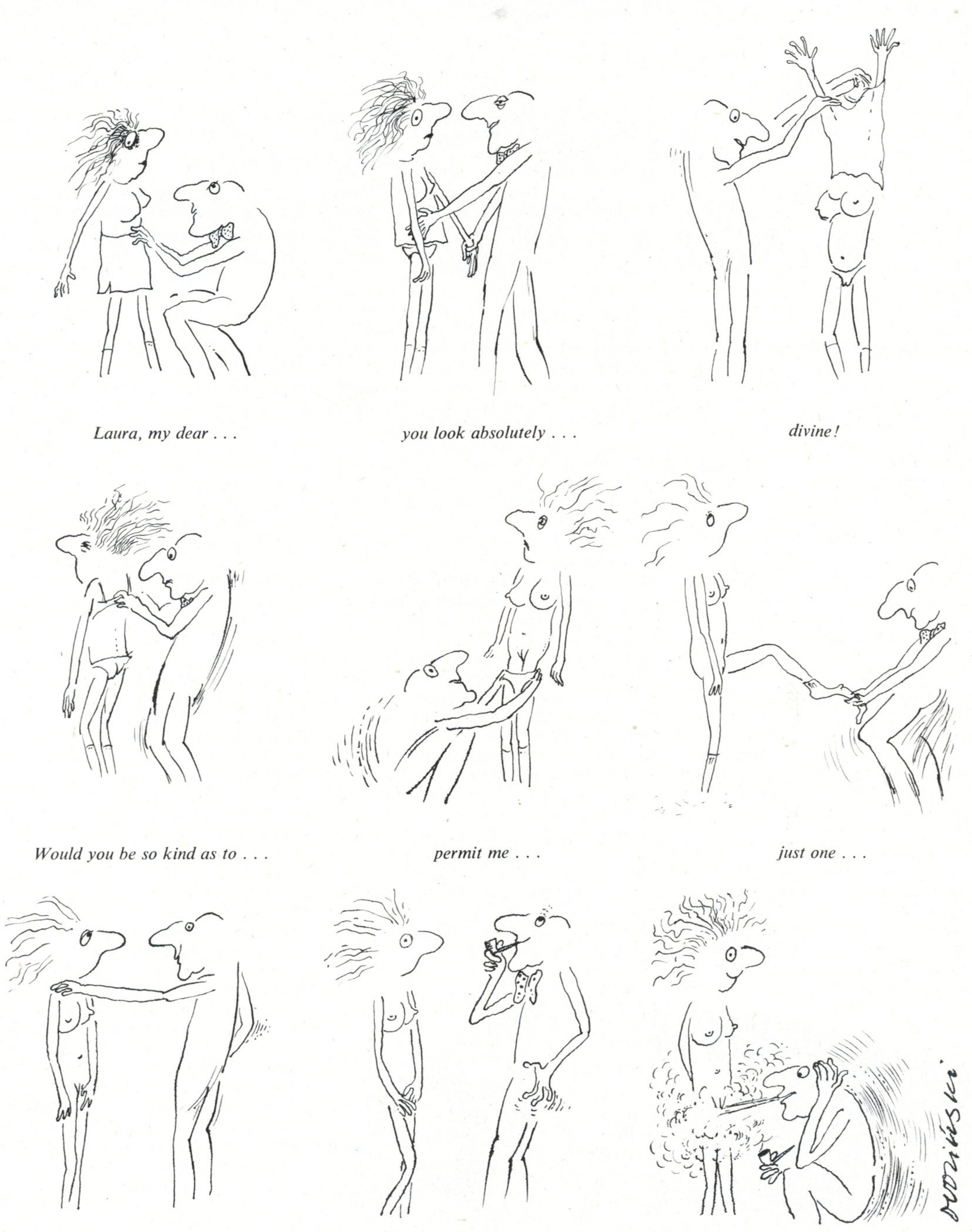
On the night of June 1 that year part of a train carrying US aircraft bombs and components caught fire and exploded near Soham station on the Ely-Newmarket branch line. The explosion blew a crater 66 feet in diameter and six feet deep. The station buildings, a signal box and fifteen houses in Soham were destroyed. The engine driver, though seriously injured, miraculously survived.

Though the exact cause of the fire leading to the explosion was never established, in the course of the inquiry that followed it was discovered that previous loads carried by the same wagons included sulphur. As a result, the inspecting officer recommended that all wagons carrying explosive substances should henceforth be specially examined and cleaned prior to loading.

Today British Rail's Southern Region, with 500,000 passengers each day, is the largest and most used suburban system in the whole of Europe. It is a tribute to modern railwaymen and present-day methods of safety that as rail traffic has increased the number of accidents has steadily declined.



The mystery of how and why the driver and fireman of the West of England night mail from Manchester allowed the train to leave the rails at Shrewsbury has never been satisfactorily explained. Both men were killed in the accident in 1907 when the engine, a new Whale 4–6–0 No 2052 Stephenson took the curve before the station too fast. Some blamed the fact that it was an experimental engine.



Laura, my dear . . .

you look absolutely . . .

divine!

Would you be so kind as to . . .

permit me . . .

just one . . .

of my little, you know

. . . how shall I put it?

– LUXURIES!

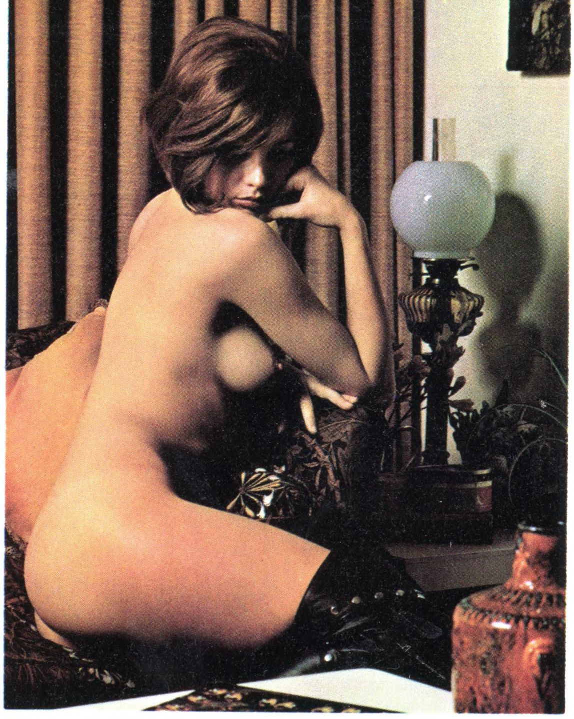
Claude

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
ED ALEXANDER

Early morning yawns. Croissants and glass bowls of hot chocolate, a Parisienne's habit in London. Chill rain streams down a window, blurring the inside outlines of Claude, 23. She lies in bed, awake but passive – for the moment. She snuggles down deep into the night warmth as the rain patters down outside and thinks about home, her future and – beautifully – about us. She thinks we are great.

'More *dans le vent* and not so . . . so . . . superficial. Is that right?' If you say so, we tell her. 'No! My English, it is not verr good.' We demur suitably, omitting to point out that when she loses the 'y' of very and substitutes two 'rs' she justifies, to our mind, an immediate public inquiry into the diverting distortion of the English language. Claude goes on: 'Here, in England, no-one looks at you for the way you

dress and that is marvellous. In Paris, where I live, it is not always so.' For a fleeting second we sense something stronger than dislike, but then it's gone. We probe, unsure. Doesn't every girl like to be looked at for the way she wears clothes? 'Oh, so-so. There are ways and ways' says Claude, shrugging those oh-so elegant shoulders in a gesture as old as the mystique of her homeland. Looking quietly at Claude we are aware of a subtle combination of attractions within a whole that is all woman. The smooth, crisp outline of a pendulous breast; the dark halo of fine hair that sweeps to her jaw-line;



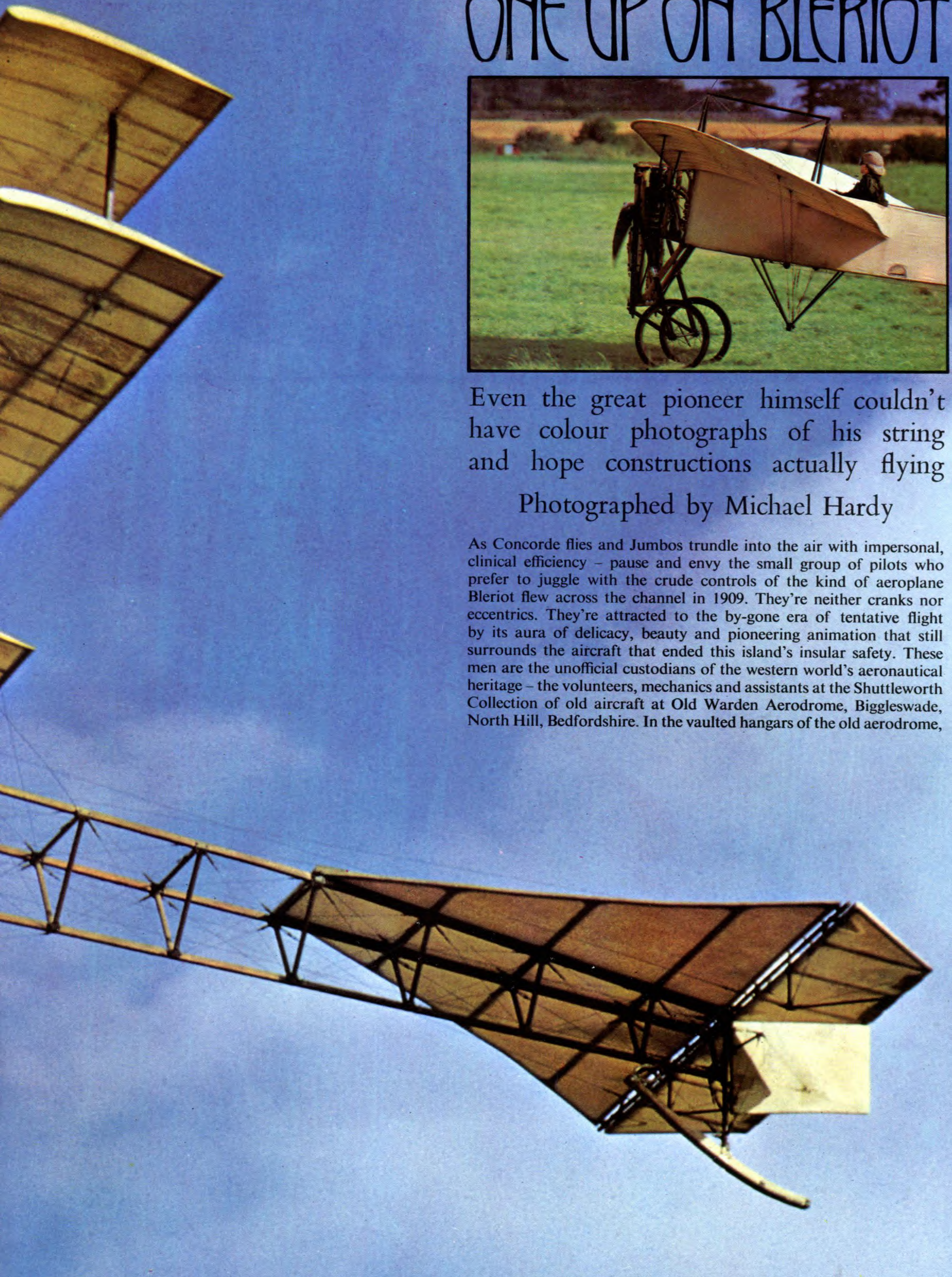
the way that soft pink tongue struggles, kittenish, with the hard, long sounds of a foreign language. Shoulders smooth and subtle, thigh-hard and breast-warm. But beneath an utterly feminine hesitation as she pauses for the way to say what she feels, there is a strength, almost an assertive aggression that only heightens her desirability. And that, we all agree, she has in plenty. Somehow we don't need to be told that Claude was more likely to kick stones in the street than worry about scraping her knees in infancy. She was born in Lille but life had few smiles for her in those days. She moved to Paris as soon as she could afford to because 'the north of France is so sad, you know? It is not good to live in a sad place for very long because then you yourself become more sad . . . sadder?' Once in Paris, alone, she hunted around for the first apartment of her own. Somewhere to slough off her old self and emerge as the new Claude, 37-23-37. She found an apartment near the Arc de Triomphe and gradually the transformation took place. She took an interest in local drama and began sketching. 'I like to draw people' she admits simply. Now those faltering days of self-discovery are over. Banished. Once she wanted a friend and there was no-one. Today there are, maybe, too many. 'I have no-one special to care for me now. My future is open. I prefer to play life like that.' Perhaps you'll play it with an Englishman, Claude. Please?

MAYFAIR'S GIRL OF THE MONTH / CLAUDE CARREFOUR

MAYFAIR'S GIRL OF THE MONTH / CLAUDE CARREFOUR

AVRO

ONE UP ON BLERIOT

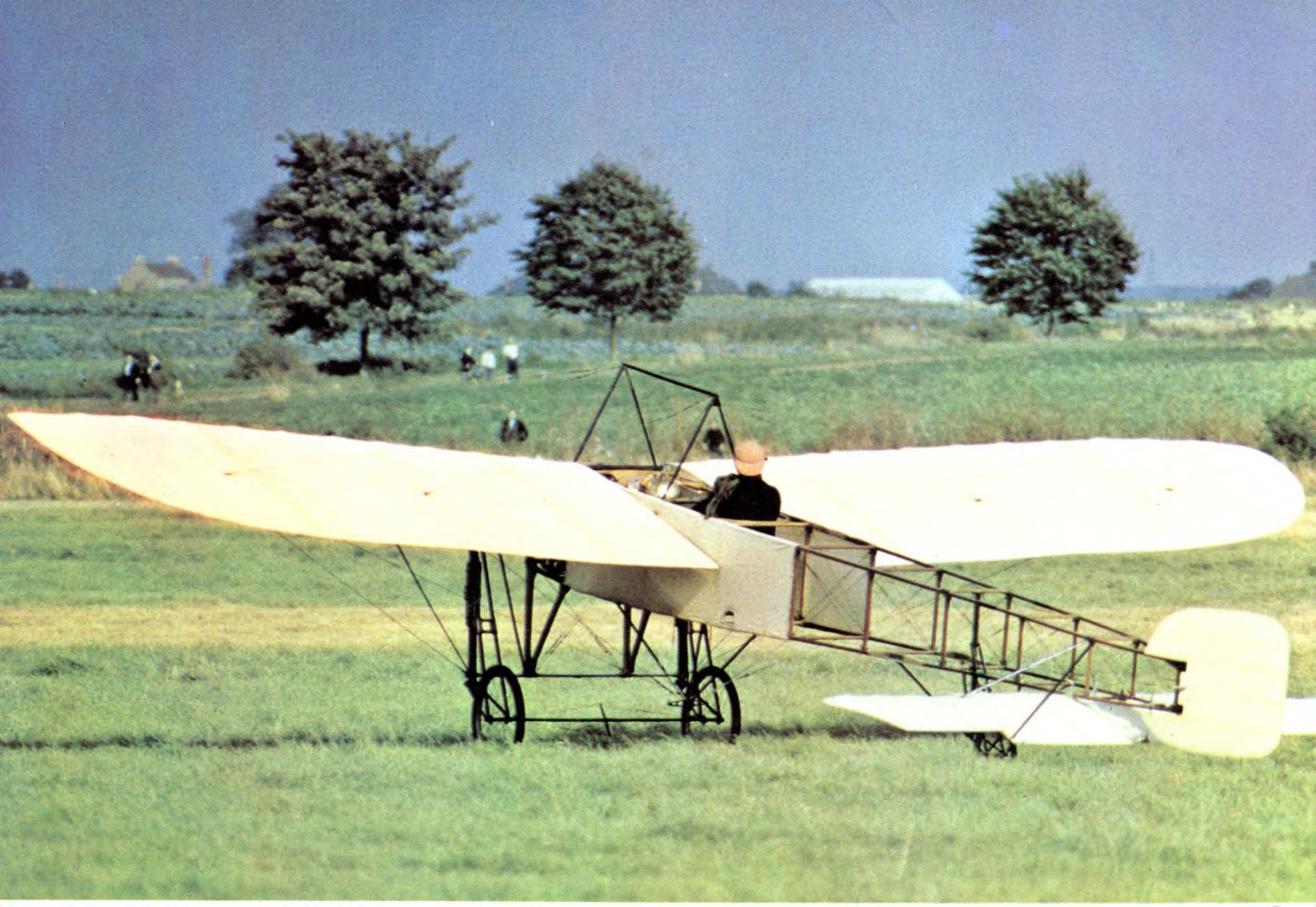


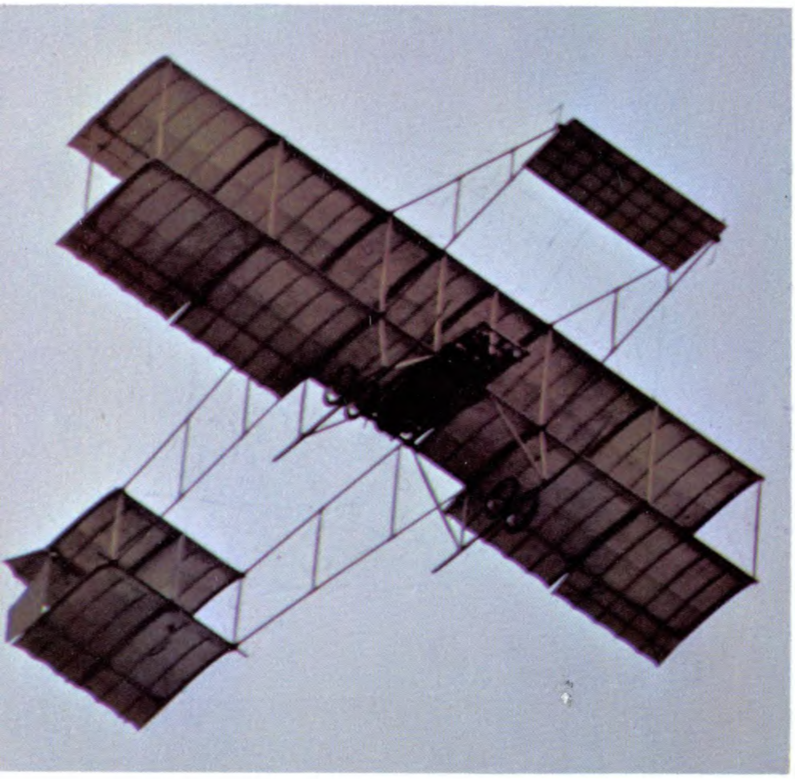
Even the great pioneer himself couldn't have colour photographs of his string and hope constructions actually flying

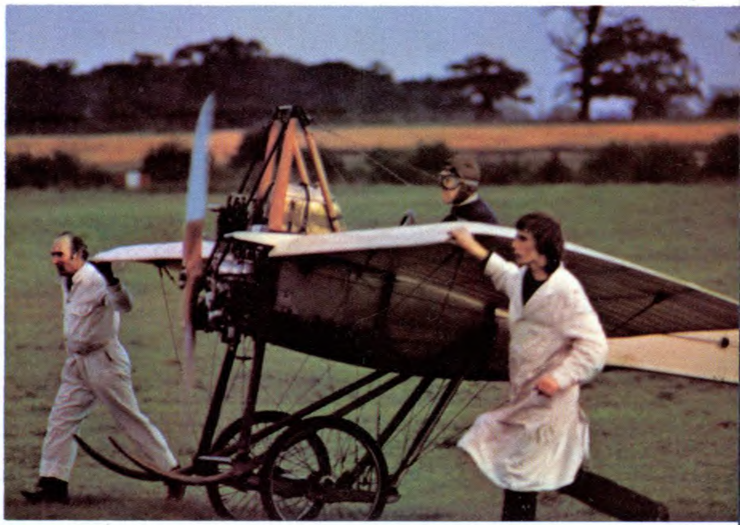
Photographed by Michael Hardy

As Concorde flies and Jumbos trundle into the air with impersonal, clinical efficiency – pause and envy the small group of pilots who prefer to juggle with the crude controls of the kind of aeroplane Bleriot flew across the channel in 1909. They're neither cranks nor eccentrics. They're attracted to the by-gone era of tentative flight by its aura of delicacy, beauty and pioneering animation that still surrounds the aircraft that ended this island's insular safety. These men are the unofficial custodians of the western world's aeronautical heritage – the volunteers, mechanics and assistants at the Shuttleworth Collection of old aircraft at Old Warden Aerodrome, Biggleswade, North Hill, Bedfordshire. In the vaulted hangars of the old aerodrome,

Above: a 1910 Avro triplane powered by a Cirrus-Hermes engine. Inset: a Bleriot similar to the one that crossed the Channel in July 1909

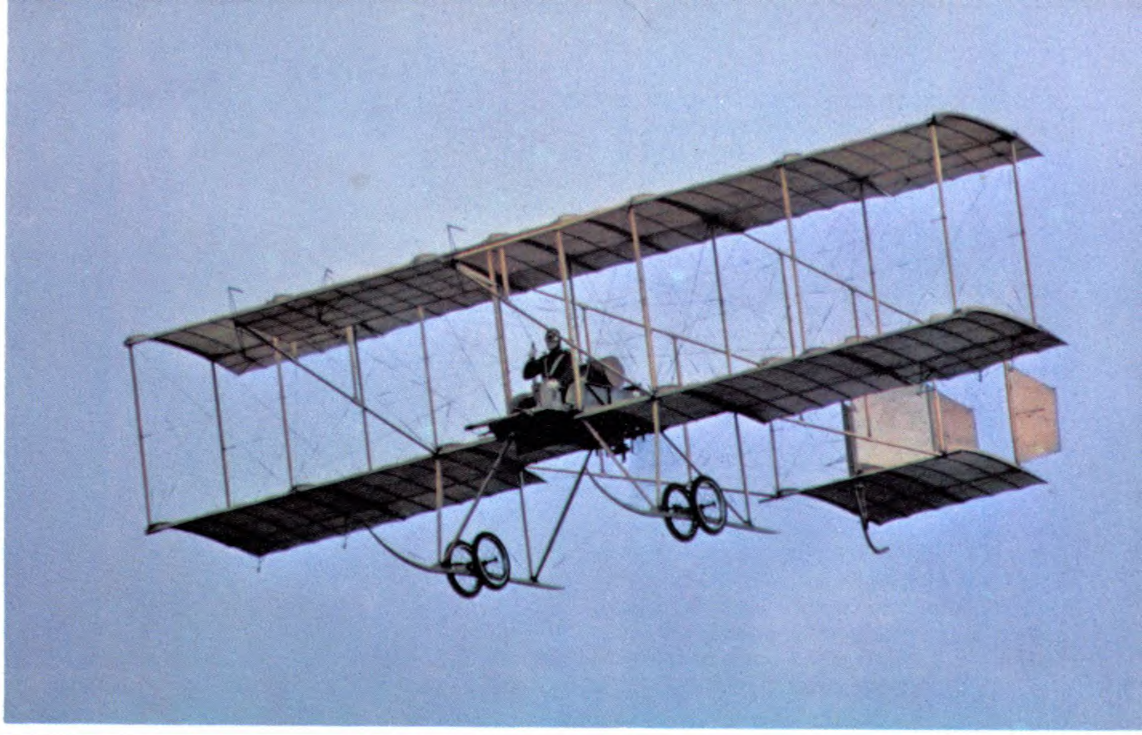


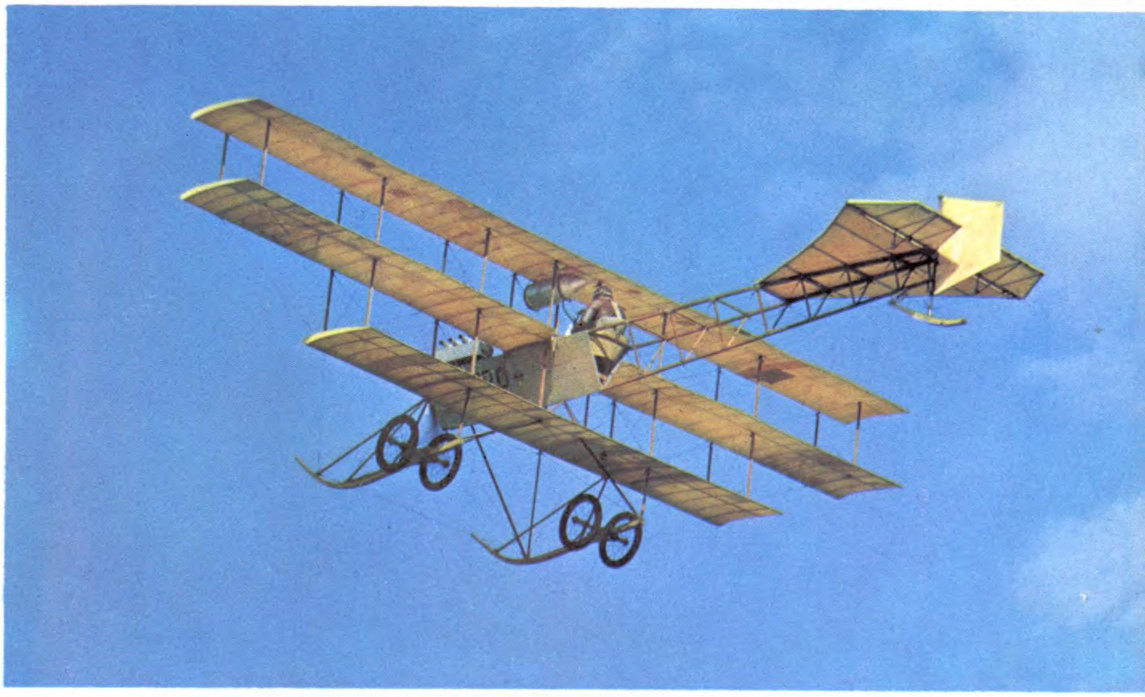




This page, top: this photograph of Bleriot's open-cockpit monoplane shows the frailty of the early aeroplanes. Below, left: a replica Bristol Box-kite of 1910, powered now by a Rolls-Royce Continental engine. Right, top: a three-cylinder curved-wing Deperdussin 'IO original powered by a 35 hp 'Y' type Anzani engine. Below: another original, a 1912 curved-wing Blackburn monoplane with a Gnome engine and a top speed of 60 mph twenty-five reproductions and originals, some from the turn of the century, are husbanded with jealous pride and kept in running order. All but five actually fly. Keeping them airworthy is a problem. Old frames and canvas rot and fall apart. The trust relies upon the original aircraft manufacturers for spare parts. They also advertise for help in the making of spares in model magazines and the trade press. Today, the collection is priceless. The Shuttleworth Trust was set up in 1943 to commemorate Pilot Officer Shuttleworth who was shot down and killed in 1940. Before the war he collected aeroplanes but concentrated on bicycles and old cars. Today his epitaph is the largest collection of its kind in the country.

One of the few men entrusted to fly one of the aircraft is Air Commodore Allen Wheeler, who says: 'They're a joy to fly – a bit sluggish by modern standards but much simpler to handle with a very slow landing speed somewhere between 30 and 45 mph.' Wheeler insists, 'They're no more dangerous than other, more modern, planes. The "killer" in the early days was the pilots' inexperience.' The men who fly the collection are one up on Bleriot.





This page, top to bottom: a fine study of the Bristol Box-kite in mid-flight with below, two studies of the Avro triplane that, with its 75 hp engine, weighed 650 lbs. Above: front profile of the Bleriot

She was leggy, lovely and very, very bored. She was also the boss's wife but with my scheme I'd still see her nude by nightfall

THE ROUTE TO PLAN D

Fiction by M. H. Black

Jennings picked up the suitcase. 'I've got to go up North this weekend. Take this case of dirty clothes back to my wife, will you. It's on your way home?'

'Yes it is.' He knew it was. I disliked the idea of delivering dirty laundry, but hell, I was there for the money and Jennings was the director responsible for my salary; 'I'll take it for you gladly.'

'Good man.' Jennings nodded. 'Tell my wife I want them clean for Monday.'

Did I smell discord? 'I'll do that Mr. Jennings. Have a good trip.'

'Thank you.' His eyes fell to the work on his desk. I was dismissed.

I lugged the suitcase downstairs. The Morgan protested at the weight. Jennings must have had a personal problem to be that dirty. I cut into the traffic. On Fridays I liked getting away early – I still did some painting. The rush hour had barely started.

As I drove, I tried to picture Mrs. Jennings. I'd met most of the directors' wives at the annual dinner for senior executives. They'd bent the rules to let their tame artist in, to see if I actually ate cooked food. Jennings was around thirty-five, so his wife would be moderately young . . . Yes. A good deal younger than him; a lot younger; younger than me, now I remembered. A beautiful girl, dark, with a figure like a relief map of a Swiss canton. Jennings had kept her very much to himself. At the time I hadn't blamed the thin-lipped bastard.

The road cut across the council house belt, meandered across the desert of suburbia and then reached the Rover pretention, finally it arrived at the Bentley acres. Me, I'm a country boy, always will be.

I live a good deal further out, but I knew vaguely where Jennings' avenue was. The Morgan throbbed between flowering chestnuts and cherries. It rather fancied spring, that car. I swung up the drive of the house. Crisp gravel pinged against the wings.

The house was big and overkept, too tidy to be a home for anybody but Jennings. I jumped out of the car. I was wearing an old pair of blue Levis, battered desert boots, and a mauve and white floral shirt. The outfit shook everyone at the slave mine – besides suiting my long legs and wide bony shoulders. Luckily I was a good designer, or I would never have got away with it.

The early Transylvanian bell echoed around

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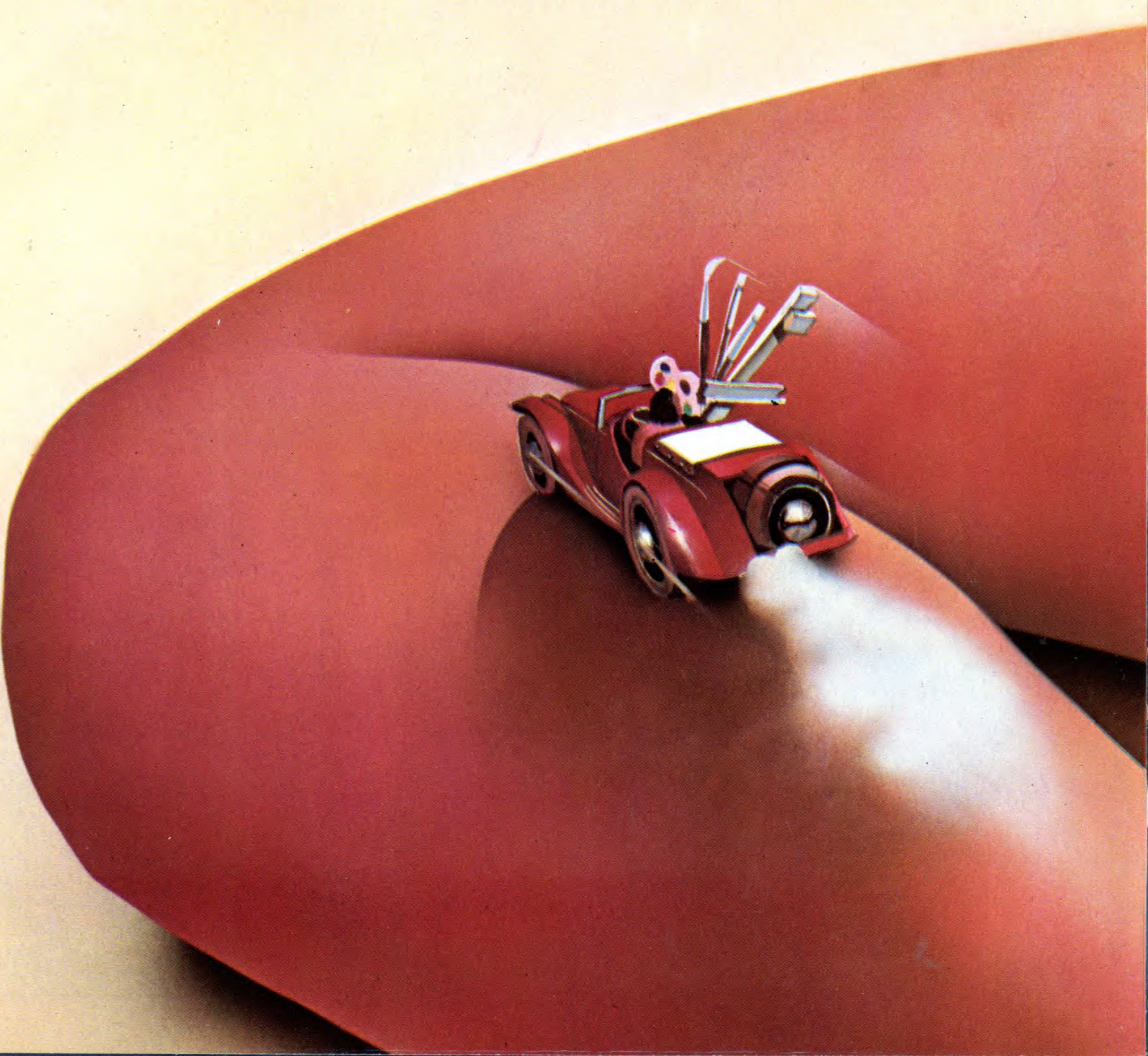

ILLUSTRATION BY PHILIP CASTLE

THE ROUTE TO PLAN D

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the house. A long wait. I stood on the step holding Jennings' dirty laundry. Footsteps in the hall, the pish-clack women's sandals make. The door opened a fraction.

'Hello, Mrs Jennings? I'm Pete Hughes from Williams . . . ' The door opened wider.

'Oh hello, Pete. I've seen you . . . Yes, at the party.'

'That's right.' I grinned amiably. 'Mr Jennings asked me to drop round this bundle of dirty linen. There's been some trouble at one of the factories up North. He asked me to tell you that he will be back on Monday and please to have everything washed and ironed by then.' God what a swine!

The girl's dark eyes glittered. 'How dare he? You'd think I was . . . Oh, but it was very kind of you to bring it.'

I saw her eyes sweep over me and the red, gleaming Morgan. I took a step forward. 'I'd better carry it for you. There seems rather a lot of it.'

She smiled, a different, intriguing smile. 'Well, thank you.'

I followed her into the house, intrigued in turn. I had obviously disturbed her whilst she had been sunbathing. A loose orange towelling jacket had been casually thrown over a tiny black bikini. Her golden flesh glistened, like the sheen on fresh-gathered fruits. In front of me two slender legs – slim calves, glorious thighs, ending in a briefly glimpsed bottom – swayed and wiggled. Dark hair tumbled to the shoulders of the orange towelling. This one I had to have. But which plan? Her dark eyes had a depth about them. She wasn't hard and sophisticated enough for Plan B, nor giggly enough for Plan F. It had better be Plan D – The lonely Artist Struggling in the Midst of a Materialistic Culture to Find Inspiration.

'Will you put the case down there, please, Pete.' We had reached the kitchen. 'Tea?' Her hand was on the kettle.

'Fine. Um, I'm afraid I'm being very rude, but I've got this shocking memory for names, and I just cannot remember yours – not even to save my poor artist's soul.'

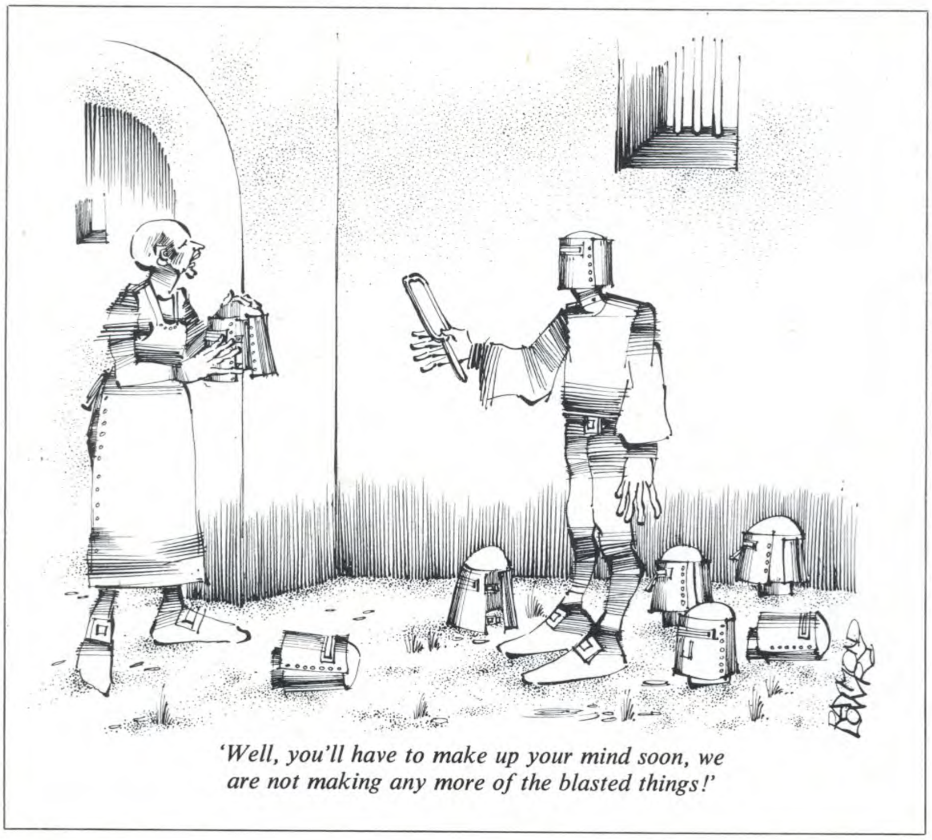
'That's alright. I'm Clare.' She gave me another dazzling smile. I wished I could admire the front of her as closely as I had her back, but she was talking to me. I wanted to open the jacket right out. The way it swelled out over her breasts . . . and the swelling where her thighs met, was the pole for my all encompassing eyes.

Tea made, we went into the lounge. The room was like Jennings, sour and repressed. Clare didn't belong in it. She sat opposite me, long legs curled daintily, pouring the fragrant unblended Uva. As she handed me a cup, the orange jacket parted, showing a tiny scrap of black nylon struggling valiantly to hold a pair of superb breasts. I was thankful that Plan D allowed me to be quiet and soulful. This one took my breath away.

From the way Clare talked it was plain that she was lonely and unhappy. I wondered what had made her marry a man like Jennings. Money? The power of the man? Maybe she'd just been young and stupid, but she was obviously bored as hell now – and neglected. Even the sound of her own voice seemed to please and reassure her. Jennings must have been a poor listener. I was entranced – and aroused.

'Henry tells me you're settling down quite well at Williams' she said, 'do you like working there?'

'It keeps my body clad and warm,' the thing with my plans was to emphasise, not lie. It helped to have a many-sided character. 'At heart I remain an artist.'



'Well, you'll have to make up your mind soon, we are not making any more of the blasted things!'

'You could always live in a garret.'

'Oh, I've tried that. Unfortunately I've got these expensive habits, like eating. In the end I had to surrender and start making fish slices look sexy.'

'You must be very good at it. I hear you've bought a cottage in North Devon, haven't you?'

'Yes, I have, near Hartland Point.' I said with a sigh. 'It's my dream to retire there and paint. A dream that is becoming quite an obsession.'

'We can't all have what we want, can we?' It was said so sadly, so wistfully, that I had a job to hang on to the spinning threads of plan D.

'No, I guess not.' I replied, gloomily, 'But I still hope – oh, it doesn't matter . . .'

'Go on.'

I carefully slumped dejectedly. 'I hope one day I'll find something or someone to inspire me again. I had it once, that elusive spirit, but it got away again . . .'

'What a shame.' Clare had problems of her own, but she was showing interest in my heart-rending tale of woe. 'What kind of painting did you do?'

'I used to specialise in landscapes, and . . .' I dangled the hook of Plan D . . . 'figure-work.'

'I should have thought that sold very well these days.' Clare poured me another cup of tea. A longer, more leisurely appraisal of those divine breasts. 'I can't see your inspiration drying up.'

'Unfortunately as the competition got fiercer, the supply of decent models diminished . . . I can't find one anywhere.' Then I deliberately changed the subject. 'These cups are exquisite, Crown Derby, aren't they? Not made yesterday, either – or should I stick to art?'

'No, you're quite right. Henry has a passion for china and porcelain, would you like to see his collection?'

She showed me all the bloody china in the house after that. Poor kid, she didn't dare touch most of it, just pointed. Unless I was mistaken, she wasn't really very interested, just didn't want me to go too soon, Friday to Monday can be a long time on your own. They had one or two decent paintings in the house and I admired those as well. All the time I was far more interested in the tantalising work of art that was showing me around.

Finally, when she had exhausted Jennings' inanimate possessions, I warmed up Plan D again. 'I hope you won't be offended.' I made myself gauche and rather embarrassed, 'but do you realise, you have a most interesting bone structure. Your face is superb.'

'Why, thank you.' Clare appeared startled. 'That's a very nice thing to say.'

'It's the kind of face that presents a real – real challenge to an artist. Beneath the calmness of its perfect skin tones there are indications of a different, passionate woman.'

She smiled at my exuberance. 'You hardly know me Pete.'

'I am an artist,' I said, resisting the temp-

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THE ROUTE TO PLAN D

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tation to place my hand on my breast, 'I know of these things.'

'I'd stick to fish slices, Pete, they're safer.'

'To hell with fish slices,' I raised my eyes to where the Muses should have been, 'if – if only you would sit for me. If only I could persuade you. Your portrait could be the turning point . . .'

Clare tossed her long, black hair. 'Just my portrait?' Her smile had a hint of wilful teasing. I started. As if I'd think of anything else!

'Say you'll sit for me.' I avoided a commitment so early. 'Now. Whilst the light is still strong. Please. My little studio isn't far. I can begin now. Now.'

'I don't know. I don't really think Henry would approve.' Like hell he would! But Plan D also included the swine in me. 'I'm sorry I shouldn't have asked. Of course you've things to do in your home. I shouldn't have said what I did. It was wrong – so wrong. I got carried away in my vision. Please try to understand, and be tolerant. I'll go now and leave you to get on with your work. I've wasted enough of your time already.' I turned to go. Shoulders drooping in disappointment.

'No. Just a minute.' Clare was smiling hesitantly. Hell, it was one pile of dirty washing. 'Do you really think I'm good enough to sit for you – really?'

'Yes, I do indeed. It would be marvellous.' You could almost hear the chains beginning to snap.

'Then I'll do it. After all I've nothing important to do this weekend. It'll be different.' She peeped at me through lowered lashes. 'Just my portrait . . .?'

'If you feel . . .'

'Well, we'll have to see what we can do. I'll go and get changed.'

'Don't be long.' I waved a vague hand at the sun.

'I won't.'

Clare came bouncing downstairs, only a quarter of an hour later, putting an end to my mental debate. She had brushed her hair until it glistened and swung around her shoulders, and framed her gentle face. A short, red, wet-look mini dress rode up over her thighs as she got into the Morgan, swinging her long legs with gay abandon, showing an arresting flash of white pants. Her breasts rode free and high, outlined by the clinging material.

I drove out to the little studio I rented, way out of town. The wind streamed Clare's hair like a skein of black silk. She revelled in the freedom. You could hear the chain links clanking, dropping from her mind, one by one.

Clare looked around hesitatingly. For one moment I thought I was going to end up with a nice dreary portrait of her dreamily romantic face – full stop. As I began to curse myself for not being specific enough, she gave a little shrug and undid the zip at the back of her dress. With a sigh it fell to the ground. Smiling, she stepped out of the crumple of shiny red. The reason for her pride was clearly visible. Both her breasts were perfect, the ideal size. Not big enough to be floppy, far too big to be ignored. They rose up provocatively, turning up their big brown noses, whitely advertised against suntanned flesh. They towered above a long, flat stomach, almost thin, but with enough roundness to make a comfortable cushion. She paused, reluctant, hands on the sides of her tiny pants. With another shrug that did fantastic things to those breasts, she peeled off the tiny wisp of white. Her beauty, like a little furry animal, was framed, the apex of a magnificent arch made by long, long legs. She smiled at me again, a little saucily, a little afraid, a little daring; facing me, hands beside her hips, arms forward, trusting, waiting.

'. . . *But is high-rise gingerbread the answer?*'

'That's perfect.' My voice was a sigh.

And I began to sketch, trying desperately to catch her expression. If you can't believe that I let her stand there, stark naked, without so much as a single chain link left, without touching her; you are an honest, red-blooded man. You will never be an artist. I just had to get that pose. That face. Before the light went. And Clare was a born model. She kept so still patiently. Plan D and the real me began to get rather muddled.

Finally, with the light fading, I could say 'I've finished.' More in awe of my own work than anything. 'I can start work on the real thing as soon as you like to sit for me again.' Clare was stretching, and rubbing her limbs.

'May I look? Am I allowed to?'

'Yes, sure you are.' I was defensive, I always am after I've worked long and hard. Something had gone out of me, on to the canvas. I was strung, taut, dreading criticism. Clare walked over and gazed at herself, as seen by me, for a long time.

'Am I really that – sexy?' Her voice was low, soft, excited. 'I've never – thought of myself like that.'

I could feel the warmth of her bare body. I slid an exploratory hand up over her stomach and cradled her breast. It was cool and firm, the nipple was hard, urgent.

'It is as I see you.' I said hoarsely. My other hand began to stroke her stomach. She made no effort to stop or encourage me. Still with her back to me she leant against me, gently.

'The real me might be a disappointment.' I kissed the back of her neck, my hand went lower, caressing, teasing.

'I'll risk it.'

Clare turned, laughing. Her arms went round my neck, her whole body pressed against me, merrily. Her lips were soft and supple and moist. 'Then don't disappoint me.' She whispered as her hand slid under my Levis. 'You shouldn't, you've got a huge paintbrush.'

'Don't squeeze it so hard, you'll spill the paint.'

'That would be a waste . . . Oh!' I had picked her up in my arms. Women always like being carried off to bed. It appeals . . . Ah hell, I'm waffling. I wasn't thinking then, not of philosophy, anyway. I laid her on my bed, and, with her giggling cooperation, shed my clothes. I leapt on to the bed and with little more than a brief reconnaissance, slid into her easily. She must have been thinking anything but wifely thoughts whilst she posed for me, she made me so welcome.

'My God, where are you going?' Clare gasped as I sank deeper.

'Interior decorating,' I whispered.

Her hands clutched at my buttocks, long fingers digging into my flesh, 'Just you dare stop, just you dare.' Her mouth crushed against mine. 'Oh God, I'm there already, quick. Harder. Harder.' Her pelvis lunged desperately against mine.

I wasn't chuckling any more. Everything

became stunningly frantic. I came swiftly and beautifully, but didn't stop. With a girl like Clare wrapped around me, it would have been sacrilege. We rolled on the bed, thrusting and heaving and becoming lovers, one. It wasn't just a casual Planned bang anymore. It was much, much too good. The union of two bodies, like those sexless instruction books for young brides, say. The intensity of pleasure startled even experienced me.

But eventually, even I had to admit defeat. After yet another long, shuddering climax . . . 'Clare, honey, I'm finished.' I had to admit, 'For the time being, at least.'

'Phew!'

Withdrawing my shrinking assets, I rolled over on to my back. Clare knelt astride me and leaning forward, she tickled my chest with the nipples of her breasts. Great curtains of dark hair hid us from the world.

'I like men with hairy chests' she moved against me provocatively, 'they say it's a sign of virility.'

It was very late when I got her home. She wouldn't let me come into the house because of the neighbours. I didn't understand, but I was too damn tired to argue. The important thing was that she was only too willing to come again and pose for me. I drove away from the house, very pleased with myself – and Plan D.

And it was all so easy. There was some king of 'trubble a't'mill' up North. Jennings kept on weekending up there. He seemed to like using me as an errand boy for some peculiar reason of his own. I didn't care. I just slid along to his house in the Morgan, left the flowers or washing or terse message in the hall and took his wife off to my cottage. I often wondered about the flowers.

The only thing Clare refused to do was spend the night with me. I argued, but she had some kind of obsession that Jennings would find out if we did. At last, at long last, one evening, after a really magnificent rumple, when I'm sure we proved that levitation is possible, instead of just pecking my cheek, Clare took my hand.

'Come on, darling, I can't say "good-night" now, not after that, come on, let me show you my bed. It's just made for us.'

Grinning like a Cheshire cat, I buried the Morgan in the garage and followed Clare into the house, through the connecting door. She carefully drew all the curtains in the house before turning on the lights. Whilst she was working out her 'spying neighbours' kick, I raided the cocktail cabinet. I stroked a bottle of fifteen year old Macallan Glenlivet with awe. Jenning's taste in whisky was as great as his taste in women. One in each hand I made up to his bedroom to enjoy them both. And it was a bed! It was huge and round and . . . and I felt sick with jealousy. Jennings could enjoy Clare whenever he wanted. He could listen to her chatter. He could watch her dress . . . but it was my Levis Clare was happily pulling off, making little gurgling noises. My mind was a tumult of emotions for a moment. But Clare's excitement was catching. In a second our clothes were a pile on the floor. We were a more complicated writhing pile on the bed. It's great in a circular bed. There's no head and there's no tail. You can go wherever you want. And we wanted plenty.

A blinding flash filled my eyes. I gasped in horror. I must have done myself a mischief at last! Another flash. Clare squealed. Her body went hard. Rigid. Another flash. God! A flash gun!

'One more, Hopkins,' Jennings voice. Dry. Humourless. Victorious. Yet another flash. I fell off Clare. We both tried to cover each other's nakedness. Jennings and a tired looking man with a camera were peering down at us. 'You filthy, deceiving, swine.' Jennings speech was intended for Hopkins notebook, not me. 'The minute my back is turned, you seduce my wife. You're finished. Finished, d'you hear? I'll see you never design another package in your life. You're finished – you – artistic fraud.'

'It was my fault, Henry.' Clare was clinging to me desperately. I was glad she spoke first. For one terrible second I thought I'd been trapped in the oldest trap of all.

'Please. Blame me, not him. I encouraged him. Be kind – please. Just for once, be kind.'

'You!' Jenning's mouth was pretty – as a mousetrap, 'You're finished, too. You're out. No more nice clothes. No more expensive jewellery. You're going to the gutter – you expensive, grasping little slut.'

I barely heard them arguing – Clare defending me, Jennings insulting us both. I was too busy thinking. It had all been set up so beautifully. Sitting naked on his naked bed with his naked wife, I had to admire Jennings' ruthlessness. In one carefully planned operation, he had got rid of the two people he hated most: Clare because she was expensive, me because I was me. The man deserved his power. And me? Make no mistake, I'd lost. Goodbye job. Goodbye salary. Goodbye security. Goodbye Clare? Oh no. No. That was unthinkable. I needed her. Needed her so much. I looked at her suddenly. Her dark eyes were filled with tears, but she tried to smile. I couldn't just leave her.

'OK.' I said, 'I'll resign. I'll leave you and your bloody slave factory. I resign.' Jennings began to crow. I suddenly wondered if he would crow quite so loudly when the Board discovered he'd lost their 'boy wonder'. I must have been a good designer for Jennings to put up with me for so long. Still, finding a replacement for me was Jennings' worry, not mine. I interrupted his babbling, 'OK, having settled that, what are you going to do about Clare?'

'Divorce her and sue you for every penny you've got.'

'Oh stuff it. You're out of date, you old windbag. The most you'll get out of me will be costs. That won't ruin me. The publicity will make my reputation if nothing else.' I looked at Hopkins, 'Have you got enough evidence for a divorce?'

'Enough.'

'If you need any more, come down to North Devon. Mrs Jennings will be living with me in my studio down there. We won't contest the case. We'll both be too glad to get away from Jennings.' I felt Clare's fingers digging into my arm. Her teeth nibbled at my shoulder. Before she could speak, Jennings blurted incredulously.

'You're not going with him!' It was the first time I'd ever seen Jennings surprised. 'Him! I can understand you lusting after him, but he couldn't keep you in jewellery for a . . . a . . ."

Clare was sliding off the bed. Calmly she tugged off her rings. They tinkled on the bedside table. 'Bye, Henry,' she said. Totally unconcerned by being watched by three men, she picked up my shirt. It made a decent enough mini dress. She grinned at me wickedly. 'I'm ready, darling. My pills are in my handbag. That's all I need.'

And so I opted out with a beautiful woman, a Morgan and a growing reputation. I guess that does make me a fraud. But not a poor one.

STOCKINGS—the sexiest turn-on of all time

Why blush, dear girl, pray tell me why?
You need not, I can prove it;
For tho' your garter met my eye,
My thoughts were far above it.
'The Oracle', 1800

'I've taken to wearing stockings because older men are kinky about them' – thus, tartly, Joe Lampton gets reminded of his age in one of the TV episodes of *Man at the Top,* when he finds his son's scheming teenage girl friend has swapped her tights for a pair of nylons to lure father into bed.

In some trendy quarters stockings are readily dismissed as an outmoded fetish for the elderly which has no relevance among young people because they take the naked body for granted. But this is only the environmental reaction to being reared on a daily diet of pantie-anchored tights instead of the hopeful glimpses of bare thigh which nourished adolescent male libidos before the advent of micro-skirts.

In fact stockings are complementary to, rather than a substitute for, pubic liberation; even the ancient Egyptians made use of leg warmers held up by a primitive kind of suspender belt which was designed to leave the so-called private parts on public view.

This is not to deny that tights are sexy, and never more so than with hot pants; preserving the essential shape of the wearer's legs they add an exciting new texture and colour to her skin. Yet no matter how caressive and invitingly transparent, tights remain fundamentally impregnable, lacking that subtler erotic appeal which stockings convey by inferring accessibility.

To expose the darker band of the welt in heightened contrast to the flesh is to hint at the inherent promise of the bare thigh beyond, and the seam which was once indispensable enjoys its own mystique in leading the male gaze from heel to hip: during the 1950s girls risked laddering their nylons by wearing them inside out just to emphasize the seams, ironically with much the same effect as the false seams which have to be sewn on to modern circular-knit tights to cater for the current revival. Likewise erotic overtones pervade even the mechanics of keeping stockings up, particularly with suspenders which form a convenient bridge connecting stocking top with the ultimate delights above. For some girls of sapphic inclination the dangling suspender can become a penis-substitute able to achieve its own erection when tautly fastened.

As far back as the Norman Conquest cloth stockings were regularly worn gartered at or above the knee and, bearing in mind that underwear had not yet been invented, exploring up skirts seems likely to have been a popular way to brighten up the Dark Ages. By tradition the Most Noble Order of the Garter owed its origins in 1348 to an astute exchange between Edward III and the Countess of Salisbury and, though historians discredit the tale, it must have drawn some currency as a reflection of the attitude of the times. Witches, for whom the garter holds a ritual significance, have their own theories about the incident. By the 15th century the Duchess of Orleans was sporting jewelled garters, and there is a striking version of 'Death and the Maiden' by Niklaus Manuel Deutsch in the Art Gallery at Basle which shows a young lady hoisting her skirt high above her garters to let a rather grisly skeleton feel her up in a manner which suggests she is no stranger to such favours.

According to a letter sent to Sir William Cecil, when Mary Queen of Scots went to her execution in 1587, she was wearing blue worsted stockings with silver edging at the tops held up by green silk garters. Had poor Mary survived a little longer, on this colourful evidence she would have welcomed the invention of the stocking frame but, as it was, the first pair of knitted silk stockings went to her rival, Elizabeth I, who by then was probably in no shape to make the most of them.

Leg art being not exactly to Puritan tastes stayed largely unexploited until the Restoration but by 1671 a character in William Wycherley's 'The Dancing Master' could confess of a male victim that she had 'taken occasion to garter my stockings before him', thereby launching an erotic ploy which has proved successful for 300 years.

At wedding feasts it became the custom for guests to vie with each other to relieve the bride of her garters, a symbolic defloration which might have been the inspiration for that infallible ice-breaker at more modern parties where the boys had to switch round their partners' nylons without female aid.

It needed the randy atmosphere of the 18th century to appreciate that the sexiest

Since the time of the Norman Conquest stockings and garters have heightened the allure of a woman's legs and the mystery above. R. Carpenter shows why

colour for stockings is black, although one writer in a journal of 1737 admitted that 'a lady's leg . . . enclosed in white . . . makes an irresistible attack upon us'. Certainly on the evidence of numerous prints by Hogarth stocking tops were flaunted at all levels of society as never before, and in France when Fragonard could tear himself away from painting voluptuous nudes, he turned his attention to the attractive vistas afforded by saucy damsels who posed sitting on garden swings in their hooped pannier skirts.

Silk garters were on sale in 1739 carrying the motto 'no search', and the Gallery of English Costume at Platt Hall, Manchester, boasts a pair dating from 1717 embroidered to read across both legs 'My heart is fixt, I cannot range, I like my choice too well to change': evidently the chosen one himself was not the only admirer expected to progress far enough to get to the message. After a preliminary flirtation with pink and white tights to accommodate see-through fashions during the Directory and the Empire, the 19th century settled into an era of contradiction. In public, leg-show was a lost art thwarted by the universal adoption of passion-killing drawers, which for generations since they were introduced by Catherine de Medici had served on and off, mostly off, as no more than an aristocratic means of titillation. In private, as if to make up for it, girls would keep their stockings on even while they paraded their nakedness round the boudoir to please their lovers; the subject was a familiar one to countless 19th century artists from the notorious Félicien Rops to celebrated figures like Courbet, who painted a reclining nude complete with white stockings in 1862 which inspired one of the earliest sets of pin-up photographs unspoiled by airbrush and still touchingly sexy.

Out of this contrasting ambience of propriety and immodesty evolved what was to become the quintessence of stocking eroticism, the divine cancan. It began with the chahut, a crude version of the polka which swept the less reputable dance halls of Paris around 1840. The chahuteuses were poor but they possessed no lack of youthful enthusiasm and their greatest delight was to scandalize the establishment, so they vied with each other to kick their legs as high as they could. On the wages of a Grisette none of the girls could afford the fancy bloomers and petticoats which wealthier classes had adopted; instead they still went without underwear and revealed beneath their cheap cotton maxi-skirts not only stocking tops but also for brief moments what André Warnod in a contemporary description of the Moulin de la Galette called 'a delicate down in the inguinal region'.

Not surprisingly, visiting the halls to watch the dancers quickly prospered as a spectator sport, and progressive promoters recognised the advantages of establishing the pace-setters on a semi-professional basis. Athletic prowess in bed tended to be a characteristic they all possessed, so when the improvised steps of the chahut were gradually standardized in the routine of the cancan, it was natural simply to translate familiar movements from the horizontal to the vertical.

By mid-century the 'National Dance' of the Latin Quarter had conquered both banks of the Seine but the price of quasi-respectability was the acquisition of underwear, and stocking tops disappeared beneath knee-length drawers and voluminous lace petticoats. In this way there was no affront to the Penal Code but it was not so easy to deter some girls, like Grille d'Egout, a contemporary of Toulouse-Lautrec's immortal La Goulue at the Moulin Rouge, who was renowned both for her exceptionally immaculate dessous and for her ingenuity in letting slip glimpses of forbidden flesh. In the same hall another friend of Lautrec called Durocher had the enviable task of inspecting the dancers before each performance to check that they had sewn up their open-crotch bloomers; the number of safety-pins he needed suggests that most of the girls were generous enough to leave the job to him.

The first stretch garters had appeared about 1830 and in time the idea occurred of attaching strips of elastic vertically to corsets as an alternative method to keep stockings up. The decorative possibilities of suspenders were not very quickly grasped, although James Laver has unearthed a notable exception where they were featured with disarming candour in costumes designed by Alfred Grévin for Offenbach's *Le Voyage dans la Lune*. The British première at the Royal Alhambra Theatre, Leicester Square, in 1876 must have raised a few Victorian eyebrows, despite pink tights worn under the stockings to guard the modesty of naked thighs.

Although long drawers survived at the Moulin Rouge until the turn of the century, the acceptance of suspenders for normal wear during the '90s helped to establish a definitive version of the cancan costume which reigned supreme throughout the golden years before World War I and stays unchanged today. Layers of flounced petticoats remained but the long bloomers were abbreviated to frilly short knickers which would truly have deserved to be called hot pants; cheap cotton stockings gave way to sleek black silk and interest was focused unequivocally on suspenders and bare thighs.

With the arrival of the Jazz Age rising hem-lines dictated a bare leg effect and for the first time stockings acquired the neutral beige and tan shades which were later to become universal. Having discarded mother's corsets the suspenderless flapper followed the advice of a 1926 pop song to 'roll 'em, girls, roll 'em' and wound her stockings tightly round garters either below or above the knees, depending on how bold she was, but always so that the tops were showing.

Skirt lengths fell in 1929 as sharply as the stock market, and the suspender belt, which had only briefly begun to challenge the corset before the rolled stocking craze, came into its own as Hollywood suddenly woke up to the erotic principle which Alfred Grévin had recognised over 50 years earlier. That spate of 'all-talking, all-singing, all-dancing' musicals which marked the coming of sound tried very hard to be all-revealing as well; there is a shot from *Fox Movietone Follies of 1929* which captures the mood to perfection swinging in panoramic close-up along a line of chorus girls' legs, somewhat chubby by today's Twiggy-orientated tastes but sheathed, as Twiggy herself would love, in the sexiest of long suspender-topped pale silk stockings which glint like quicksilver in the glare of the spot-lights.

For five fabulous years stars and starlets alike traipsed around the screen in their lingerie on the slightest pretext, aspiring to match the most celebrated of all stocking top poses immortalized by Marlene Dietrich sitting on an upturned barrel in *The Blue Angel* (1930) and singing 'Falling in Love Again' as much with her incomparable legs as with her voice. *Gold Diggers of 1933* carried the trend to its ultimate expression when Busby Berkeley put his enormous chorus line into floating chiffon maxi-dresses which are the embodiment of '30s elegance yet prove to be totally transparent so that the girls' suspenders and stockings are visible in every detail, implying the wish-fulfilment of X-ray vision with deliciously impudent effect. Just to drive the point home some of the girls pull up their skirts and get down to an extraordinary petting routine on a grassy bank flashing their legs for the benefit of a prowling voyeuristic camera.

By the standards of the revised Motion Picture Code of 1934 the inner surface of a female thigh was considered to represent the height of salacity, so it came as no surprise that leg art was an early victim of the puritan backlash both on and off the screen. Suddenly any girl who so much as let a suspender button see the light of day other than by accident found herself branded as a tart. With the invention of nylon thread followed shortly by wartime austerity the luxurious sheen of real silk stockings seemed doomed to disappear altogether, but not without a final blaze of glossy glory adorning the legs of Wrens because an enlightened First Lord of the Admiralty knew how to boost the morale of his sailors. Making their own special contribution to the war effort many a precious pair came to grief heroically laddered in the course of active service. After nylons had remained uniformly and obstinately colourless for a decade in character with post-war drabness, reaction was inevitable. As early as 1949 the cinema was pointing the way in *Bitter Rice* with Silvana Mangano defiantly baring lusty thighs between tight shorts and rough black cotton stockings as she works ankle-deep in a Piemonte paddy-field. Far from being a sexual affectation stockings are worn by rice-girls in the water to afford protection against insect bites, but the visual impact is of an earthy eroticism which for 1949 was sensational.

'Good God – 13½ denier, triple-underwoven, superfine yarn – made on our 7.3826 plant in Nottingham'

Even more telling and certainly more surprising was the influence of that peculiarly English institution, St. Trinian's. The adolescent harpies in Ronald Searle's cartoon world invariably exhibited yawning pimply gaps between shapeless shrunken gym slips and thick black woollen stockings, reflecting a real-life scruffy innocence which passed as sexless in the days before nymphets were invented.

By a stroke of sheer genius on translation to the screen in 1954 St. Trinian's acquired a bevy of well-developed sixth-formers dressed faithfully in accordance with the spirit of Searle's drawings but with a devastating new impact. The saggy gym slip had become a crisp mini-dress with swinging pleated skirt; smart black nylons worn with high heels had replaced ill-fitting thick stockings; and there was nothing pimply about the flesh to be surveyed in between. The leg-show in the original film, *The Belles of St. Trinian's*, comes across today a little self-consciously, but by the completion of *Blue Murder at St. Trinian's* four years later inhibitions had long been dispelled: regulation height for St. Trinian's hem-lines has been permanently fixed ever since at a point exactly skimming the stocking top without hiding the welt, thus allowing the sixth-former to exhibit her suspenders with impeccable taste as she walks.

Not only did this notorious school pave the way for the mini and restore black stockings to teenage legs for the first time in nearly 40 years; above all St. Trinian's achieved the emancipation of the stocking top, but not without a struggle. Even in 1958 *Picturegoer* magazine could deplore the brazen display of nether limbs at a sixth-form jive session, taking good care to support the argument with a choice rear view of one of the dancers actually showing her pants, yet as much was already a common sight under high-swirling skirts on any dance floor. With St. Trinian's represented at every carnival rag and fancy dress ball showing suspenders to tease the boys became part of the teenage life-style: following the success of the BMC Mini in 1959 even car design seemed geared to secure the maximum exposure of leg getting in and out.

Conscious of the standard set by St. Trinian's the British cinema began to regard no film as complete without its quota of stocking tops, managing on occasions to strike much deeper undertones than the

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STOCKINGS *continued from page 54*

superficial leg-show intended: in *Carry On Regardless* (1961) the subliminal desires of every male hospital patient are realised when a line of nurses strip to their lingerie and submit to a gratuitous medical examination still wearing their caps and black nylons.

For a knowing spectator the scene touches on a surreal erotic atmosphere worthy of Clovis Trouille, an artist still too little known in this country whose use of the sexual symbolism of stocking tops is in the great tradition of Rops and Alberto Martini.

Hollywood treated the trend with exaggerated caution. In 1953 Otto Preminger had defied the Production Code with the spicy dialogue of *The Moon is Blue* but to portray a bare-thighed temptress reclining on a bed he had needed to import a British actress in the voluptuous shape of Dawn Addams, who is second only to Sophia Loren in her ability to wear suspenders in public with suave aplomb. Again it took a British director, Tony Richardson in *Sanctuary* (1961), to turn to account the potential of Lee Remick's silk stocking tops in capturing the blousy atmosphere of William Faulkner's Deep South in the days of pre-Code talkies.

By 1965 Hollywood had overcome her scruples, allowing Natalie Wood to spend much of *The Great Race* half-undressed, especially her contribution to the epic pie fight presenting an irresistible target in pink satin corselette and black stockings. In *The Silencers* (1966) Stella Stevens loses her dress at the hands of Dean Martin as he searches for a secret formula, but goes on to enjoy a spirited tussle all over the room and the bed in her undies and nylons.

It was inevitable that tights should prosper in the wake of the mini-skirt: comfort and convenience rather than considerations of modesty saw to that. But for a brief spell, as contracting hem-lines outstripped hosiery technology, the impossible came true and stocking tops actually achieved respectability. Once skirt lengths had become so short that a girl risked showing suspenders anywhere by accident, every fashion-conscious dolly felt obliged to show them everywhere by design, so she gave up tugging at her hem when she sat down and pointedly crossed her legs instead.

As a jeans-loving tomboy in Ken Russell's *French Dressing* (1964) Alita Naughton turns up at the skating-rink to please her boy friend reluctantly wearing a shapeless little dress with the palest of nylons, but she soon lets her skirt ride up getting laid along a row of seats only to have the temptations of a sexy pair of black suspenders adroitly frustrated by cumbersome roller-skates. In typical Russell style erotic promise is ultimately fulfilled on the way home along the beach with a randy dunking which she deliberately provokes by paddling in her now unhampered stockinged feet.

The whole mid-60's attitude was aptly summed up by a spontaneous incident in November 1966 when the window of a shoe shop caved in during floods in the tiny Somerset town of Frome. With her skirt tucked into her pants but keeping her stockings on for everybody to see, one of the assistants waded out into the street wholly unembarrassed and proceeded to retrieve the stock with the water lapping teasingly just below the dark tops of her nylons.

The unprecedented swiftness of the changeover to tights created something of a paradox: at a time when leg-show had become universal, leg art lost its most vital element, the psychological threshold of the stocking top. Boots afforded a ready substitute rapidly reaching thigh-length in pursuit of the receding mini-skirt. More recently demure adolescent calf-high socks have expanded likewise to complement hot pants in the style of *Bitter Rice*, after teenage experimentalists discovered the less innocent connotations of stretching them

Left: one of the earliest examples of garters worn purely for adornment is this 15th Century painting by Deutsch of a girl seduced by death. Above: in the 19th Century, Courbet was censured for his picture of a girl putting on stockings

I'M BETTER THAN A CINCH TO WIN THAT CONTEST!
CONTINUED—

Above: the artist's pure impression of the fetish and the more normal reality. A fetish female is hard, muscular and domineering; the reality is softer, vulnerable and open

The three illustrations above best reveal the pure fetish that surrounds stockings, high heels and suspenders for the serious buffs. Bottoms are high-key and the fantasy is of outrageously sensual curves dramatized by the starkness between thigh and stocking top

The widespread appeal of girls in stockings fostered an entire sub-industry of books and magazines which played on the fetish to an extent where acceptance seriously fell

over their knees. So-called stocking boots which are particularly popular in France make the best of both worlds: Nathalie Delon has lately attended a film première in Paris using a plain black dress as a foil to thigh-long glossy black boots held up skin-tight by white suspenders which she allowed to stand out in insolent contrast against her sheer black tights.

'Surprise, surprise!' reported Ann Ryan on the fashion page of the *Daily Express*, 'Delicious, colourful little suspender belts are selling again like mad'. But really this is no surprise: after five years of adjustment to tights, stockings have at last fallen into perspective. Freed from the drudgery of everyday use they have assumed a sense of special occasion to be put on with a conscious effort and, usually, a calculated objective which is uncompromisingly sexual.

When fashion is so obsessed with period dressing up, stockings have a part to play for the purists whatever style they choose from the Edwardian look to the '40s look, but on an altogether different plane is the significance of ankle-length dresses which ought to be an anachronism, yet adapt so easily to the demands of modern life.

Perhaps the way those same clinging maxis cleave to the figures of their wearers encourages an enhanced tactile awareness, but there is a growing inclination among the dedicated girls who scour the second hand stalls for granny's dresses to experiment with granny's silk and cotton stockings as well. The slippery 'living' feel of silk is only a short step from supple leather and washed-out denim. This whole trend can be traced developing gradually throughout the last decade in a succession of cult movies, whose insistence on authentic period silk stockings is a key erotic factor in stimulating actresses and audiences alike.

It began in 1961 with *La Viaccia* where Claudia Cardinale's sheer pleasure in her exquisitely clocked stockings mirrors the baroque lyricism of a 19th century Florentine bordel, progressing from leggy '20s insouciance in Ingmar Bergman's *Now About These Women* (1964) to a touch of refined sadism in *Maldonne* (1968) as Elsa Martinelli's immaculate black stockings ladder beneath the toying phallic whip of her Nazi interrogator, and culminating in 1969 with *Women in Love* where the impact of silk-stockinged thighs bared in the heat of passion is integral to the ambience with which that film pioneered a new standard of sexual liberation.

Just how significant this movement has become is evident from Elke Sommer's evocation of the era of *The Blue Angel* for the Arte Johnson Show on American TV. When she throws off her belted trench coat, it is not to disclose anything so trite as the fish-net tights which would have sufficed a year or two ago; instead the dark gleaming smoothness of genuine silk stockings proudly surmounted by a resplendent pair of suspenders transcends mere nostalgia to attain a radiant and timeless sensuality.

In view of the nostalgic almost mystical adulation which her mother, the late Maria Montez, currently inspires, it seems wholly appropriate that Tina Aumont who is essentially the prototype '70s girl should be responsible for one of the most memorable examples of stocking eroticism. In *L'Urlo*, Tinto Brass's 1970 fantasy about dropping out which the director describes as a romantic film of today, she romps through the gamut of contemporary freewheeling behaviour dressed for much of the time in little more than body paint, but she appears at her most ravishing in a kinky outfit of unbuttoned frock-coat over black undies, stockings and boots. In a surreal sequence ripe with masturbatory overtones she discards one of her boots, wraps herself round an ornate phallic street-pump and proceeds to wash her thighs caressingly under the running tap. As the water streams down her long silk-sheathed legs to trickle from her toes, she writhes in unabashed ecstasy; the effect is sumptuous and orgasmic.

Gentlemen, that reminds me...

A round-up of after-dinner jokes

Samantha and Claude were in love. On the way home from the hunt ball, Claude stopped his father's Rolls in a deserted layby and proposed they should try a little petting.

'Darling,' he murmured.

'Darling,' she moaned softly.

They were interrupted by a rap at the window. Claude wound it down and found himself confronted by the local constable on his late night rounds.

'Exactly what are you two playing at?' asked the policeman.

'Why officer,' exclaimed Samantha, quickly covering her large aristocratic breasts, 'we're only trying a little necking.'

'Well, young lady,' replied the Constable, 'would you mind putting your boyfriend's neck back into his trousers and driving on?'

The jungle explorer had saved the witch-doctor's life and was granted any single wish his heart desired.

The explorer expressed a desire to be endowed with a sexual weapon as large and prehensile as an elephant's trunk. The witch-doctor effected the change, leaving one very surprised elephant and one very satisfied explorer who left to wreak havoc among the delighted dusky females of those parts.

Some time later, back in England, he fell in love with a beautiful country girl and subsequently visited his fiancée's home to meet her parents.

Endeavouring to create a favourable impression his demeanour and table manners were exemplary. However, during the meal, and quite beyond his control, his newly acquired organ suddenly sneaked from below the table and took a currant bun. This was politely ignored. But time and again the trunk would creep over the table, steal a bun and glide out of sight.

At the end of the meal, the girl's mother offered the explorer the last remaining bun: 'Do take it,' she said. 'You are obviously very fond of them.'

'Yes, I am,' he replied, 'but I'm not very keen on where they are being stuffed.'

It was a wartime rule that water was not to be wasted. When two ATS girls were put on a charge for peeping at a sergeant of the guards taking a bath, they said that it had been all in the course of duty. Asked why, they replied, 'Sir, we wanted to see if he had more than five inches.'

Jones was propped against the bar of his local in the small Welsh mining village, knocking back a pint, when in walked his big boozing mate, Dai, sporting a swollen black eye.

'Hello, Dai,' said Jones, 'There's a black eye you got, boyo. Who hit you?'

'As a matter of fact,' replied Dai, 'Evan Pugh, hit me.'

'Christ,' said Jones, 'What with, boyo?'

'As a matter of fact,' said Dai, 'he had an iron bar in his hand.'

'And did you not have anything in your hand?'

'At the time, boyo, I had in my hand, Mrs Pugh's left titty – an object of divine beauty, but no bloody good in a punch up.'

Old Thomas was never loathe to inform his workmates that he had never owned an alarm clock and this hadn't stopped him from being at work on the dot every morning for thirty years.

'If you've never owned a clock,' commented his boss, overhearing him one day, 'how do you know what time it is? Say you woke up in the middle of the night for instance?'

Replied old Thomas, 'I can always tell the time by my bugle.'

'What? By your bugle? How's that?'

'If I wake up and don't know what time it is I open my bedroom window and start playing my bugle. Without fail, pretty soon, someone opens their window and shouts: 'Who the hell's playing a bugle at half past four in the morning?'

The two old gentleman were sharing reminiscences over a glass of port in their St. James club.

'I say old boy,' said one during a break in the other's account of women past, 'are you a oncer or a twicer?'

'Definitely a twicer. Believe in keeping the ladies satisfied, you know.'

'Which do you prefer, old boy?'

After a moment's thought, the other replied: 'I think the autumn one.'

The Costa Brava beach was packed solid with holiday-makers of every nationality. Right out in the thick of it were two young English bank clerks.

They had been lying in the seething mass of half naked bodies for an hour or so when one turned to the other: 'Bert?'

'Yes?' replied the other.

Indicating an exotic Scandinavian blonde inches away, the first clerk said, 'I think that girl fancies me. She's just adjusted her bra.'

'Well how does that show she fancies you for heavens sake?'

'She used my hand.'

Two farmers had decided to spend their savings on a fling among the bright lights of London, about which they heard so much. They arrived in town and after wining and dining, successfully picked up a lady of the streets.

Later in her bedroom, the woman gave each farmer a contraceptive with instructions for wearing it.

The farmers asked why they should don these funny looking objects. What was the meaning of it?

'If you don't wear them,' said the whore, 'I might have a baby.'

The farmers agreed to wear them and the rest of the lovemaking went smoothly. Three weeks later the same two farmers were working in the potato field when one said to the other: 'Bill, does it worry you about that bint in London having a kid?'

'No, why?' asked the other.

'Great. I've been dying for a pee for three weeks.'

A young lady from far Samarkand
Attempted to dance nude in the Strand.
The policeman on duty
Said: 'No, my proud beauty;
Them foreign contortions is banned.'

Share your after-dinner anecdotes. Send them to 'Jokes', Mayfair Magazine, 95A Chancery Lane, London WC2. There is a free subscription for the reader whose letter is selected. In case of duplication of jokes submitted, the Editor's decision on awarding a subscription is final.

BARBARA

This one, this soft, warm child woman completes our trilogy for this issue. We found Barbara in a book shop, browsing among the magazines and looking at – Mayfair. 'I just wanted to see if I was as good as some of your other girls, that's all' she explained defensively when we tackled her outside the store. 'I'm not quite as big around . . . here' she gestured to her breasts – 'as some of your models but I think I've got something you could use, don't you?' While we contemplated her 34–23–35, nineteen-year-old Barbara had

bounced off down the high street, looking, she said, for something to give an elder brother for his twenty-fifth birthday. In a daze, we hazarded socks and a balaclava helmet. When she's not taking King's Lynn high street by storm she's working in a small coffee bar in the town, going for long, lonely walks or taking brass rubbings from local Norfolk churches.

Quickly, nurse,

When a man's on the mend in hospital nurses become agonisingly untouchable

Nurse Felicity was from Jamaica. The first time I saw her she was in a draught. Her round black bottom was dappled with goosebumps. She was also about to be rudely impaled on the horns of a major dilemma.

The draught in question was coming in sudden gusts at around force four direct from one Bertram Haddock, a young man of peculiar habits. The horny dilemma was the questing index finger of Bertram's right hand as it yanked the panties from her bottom and insinuated itself between her cheeks – Bertram when at a loss for words frequently insinuated things with his fingers.

I will explain about Bertram – someone will have to, sooner or later. He occupied the hospital bed next to mine and was directly responsible for bringing me so suddenly and violently into contact with nurses. Bertram had a thing about nurses in starchy uniform. He was never slow to inform us that the thing he had on nurses was wanting a nurse on his thing. His passion for nurses was the fault of Jones. Jones emerged from an arduous term in hospital with a polaroid photograph taken up the skirt of a nurse as she bent to make his bed.

'Nurse Jenkins,' he smirked, wafting the photograph under Bertram's olfactory organ (none of us are perfect), 'she never wore knickers.'

'Ah,' I mused, 'one of the finest aerial photographs of Epping Forest I've ever seen. How nice.'

'That's not Epping Forest, boy,' said Jones. 'That's nurse Jenkins.'

The 'nurse-without-knickers' syndrome became something of a by-word in town and affected Bertram badly.

Of course, to one of my own Knoxian stature such trifling gaucheries as photographs up girls' skirts paled into insignificance beside matters of vaster import – besides which I always got camera shake at the wrong moment.

It was while walking down the road one day with Bertram that I realised how badly he had been affected.

'I say, Bertie,' I said, 'what think you of that tender young piece across the road?'

'Hum,' he said, 'not bad. Her blouse rises well . . . I say, Edward, hold on a sec. . . .'

Off he darted into the middle of the road. I though he was going for the girl. Without a by-your-leave or how-d'you-do, he stopped short of the white line and lay down on his back. I looked around and there was a bus

I'm feeling better

sex symbols. Unless, of course, you're Edward Knox. Illustrations by Cobb

bearing down on him. I could practically see the whites of the driver's knuckles. The driver stopped. Bertram stood up, dusted himself down and walked back to the pavement, disgust writ large on his delicate chinless features.

I found out later, this business with Bertram was a frequent occurrence. The idea was to get into hospital for hospital was the place where, according to Bertram, one was most likely to find nurses.

I agreed there but pointed out that a bus tootling around on top of him might well bring him up against a bunch of winged persons with harps.

'You're right, Edward, I hadn't thought of that. Perhaps I should try bubble cars.'

After this brilliant chunk of reasoning, it wasn't considered safe to allow Bertram out alone. Which explains how Bertram, Jones and Knox landed into hospital beds. Bertram's doting mother had lent him her Minor 1000 to place the impetuous youth on a more equal standing with the rest of the traffic – which is how Jones, Bertram and myself came to be approaching a roundabout at 70mph with the choke out and Bertram yelling, 'Nurse Jenkins-with-no-knickers I love you.'

Later as we lay upside down in a hedge, wheels spinning and doors jammed, waiting for the fire brigade to cut us out, Bertram voiced a minor anxiety; 'I do hope we get the same hospital Jones was in.'

We did – and Jones didn't like it. Jones was in the bed on my right, cursing Bertram in a low monotone while trying to appear comatose.

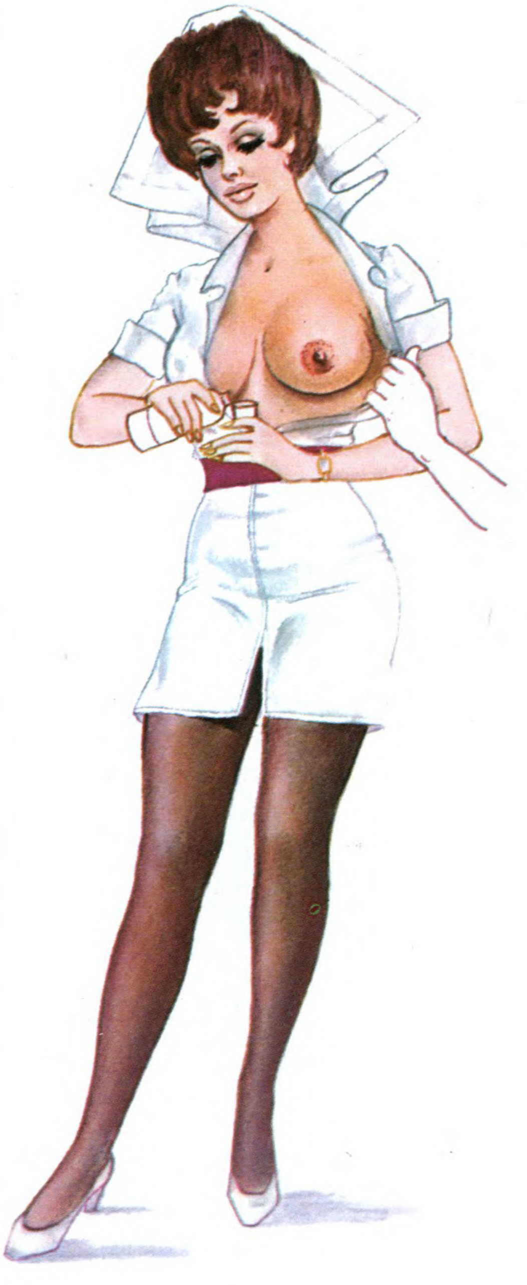
Jones feared the story of his polaroid jape under nurse Jenkins' skirt had got back to the hospital staff. He might well have worried. I knew for a fact that it had.

On my left nurse Felicity had discovered the root of her goosebumps and Bertram was still rooting.

In turning to give Bertram the voodoo eye, his hand was twisted further into the cleft of her cheeks and in tugging herself away while trying to keep her thighs together she not only decimated her panties but half pulled Bertram out of bed. 'A few seconds more,' proudly murmured Bertram later, 'and she would have been damp and dewy putty in my hands.'

Nurse Jenkins-without-knickers caught up with Jones two days later. Under other circs. Jones would have flipped his homburg. Her pin-striped uniform fastened severely high at the neck did nothing to

turn to page 75



Quickly, nurse, I'm feeling better

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cloak an upper frontage that could have passed anywhere for a pair of policemen's helmets in a football crowd. Her lips were pink and shiny, her eyes were wide and twinkling brown with scarce hidden promise. Jones appeared to be screen-testing for a major part in *The Great Escape*. He shrank.

'Well, well, who have we here?' cooed the nurse named Jenkins. Bertram and I watched fascinated.

'Har,' croaked Jones.

'We haven't got our camera with us, have we?' she cooed in a sickeningly ominous fashion.

'Arrrrgh,' affirmed Jones.

She whipped out a thermometer. 'Guess where,' she said, 'this thermometer is going, Cecil Beaton?'

Jones shook his head. 'I . . . I . . . In my mouth?' he blurted. Nurse Jenkins whipped back the bedclothes. 'Roll over, Cecil Beaton.' Down came Jones's pyjamas. In with a shudder went the thermometer. Nurse Jenkins studied her watch.

And Bertram just had to stick his oar in. Bertram wanted to see the real thing. He leaned across my bed, his hand unerring in its aim and raised the hem of nurse Jenkins' skirt. I thought he'd finally lost all reason.

As he regarded this new angle of nurse Jenkins, all was suddenly revealed. This was no aerial picture of Epping Forest – nurse Jenkins' panties clove tight to her prominent little groin and in so doing, revealed that she was shorn as smooth as nurse Sarah's superb left breast – of which more in a moment.

Nurse Jenkins was not amused. 'And what, may I ask, is going on?' Bertram's hand still grasped the uplifted hem of her skirt. He looked as though for one moment he might actually come right out with it and have a quick fantasy.

With a sigh he fell back, removing his hand, practically going to his knees. Then he blabbed – about forgiveness, mercy, humanity, the beauty of nurses, about how she wasn't the nurse Jones had photographed. He even gave a short dissertation on the beauties of the Epping landscape at sunset.

It was to no avail. She stomped from the ward without a backward glance. Bertram waited in trepidation.

I asked Jones about the photograph. It was obviously not nurse Jenkins. He admitted it. He'd shot off several rolls of film during his previous incarceration and the only picture which came out had been the one of the girl he thought was nurse Jenkins. But now that he came to think about it, it could be practically any nurse in the hospital. He had not been idle during his stay . . . Bertram's trepidations lasted eight minutes – until the moment nurse Sarah strode down the ward towards us, soft flesh rustling crisply against her starched white uniform.

'So, which is the one with hallucinations?' she asked.

We played doggo. Jones had come right way up again and was dumbly watching.

'Hallucinations?' I asked.

'Nurse Jenkins informs me one of you is suffering from hallucinations about Epping Forest.'

She was even sterner this one.

'Oh, him,' said Bertram, cocking a thumb at me and turning over. Nurse Sarah started to pour from a bottle into a glass.

I protested.

'I'm going to give you a shot of tranquillizer. It should send you to sleep.'

I implored. I begged.

Then Jones whirred back to life. I suspect he needed the tranquillizer to numb his body against the reprisals of nurse Jenkins which he feared must shortly come as the day follows night; as the thrust follows the grope. He jerked up in bed – a frequent habit of his, I'm afraid, and lunged at nurse Sarah's arm.

'Please nurse, the tranquillizer. It was me with . . .' That was the moment Jones realised that in tugging at her arm, he had tugged too at her blouse and nurse Sarah was revealing half of all – one superb left breast, the nipple crisping in the cool air. Jones slumped back as a man with the palsy – the enervating sight of nurse Sarah's boob was having the wrong effect on his adrenalin. It should have galvanised any man. Jones looked about as galvanised as a bucket.

He looked so ill, nurse Sarah gave him the shot without a word. Every time Jones regained consciousness he yelled for more. So it was left to Bertram and I to clear up the great polaroid mystery and discover which nurse, if any, had been the object of Jones's prying lens.

It got so bad towards the end that none of the nurses would come within a yard of our beds unless we were out of them. We practically got our food at the end of long sterilized poles. Nurse Laura, however, obviously hadn't been warned. She was a big blonde with strapping thighs, from the maternity ward, seconded to make our beds one morning because of a sudden shortage of staff in our ward.

It was Bertram who lifted her dress high at the back as she bent to my blankets. Bertram was interested in her bottom. Her dress wriggled to her waist as for a moment, legs braced wide apart and not aware of what was going on, she tugged against this new anti-gravitational force that was pulling her away from my bed.

Nurse Laura wore no panties under her tights and as the fine mesh pressed tightly into her mound, I was struck by a pang of instant familiarity. I had seen this bush before – thick, curling, like Epping Forest on a . . .

Allowing for camera shake and sweat on the lens, this then had been Jones's greatest undercover triumph.

'Eureka,' I think I shouted.

'Eek,' shrieked nurse Laura, spinning on Bertram and landing a hefty slap; and I could swear to this day, I heard the sound of Bertram's eyes popping.

Jones remained strangely chastened after his hospital ordeal and we never did work out how he'd got into the maternity ward in the first place – or why.

QUEST

The laboratory of human response
Volume Four

The passive days of lie-back-and-let-it happen are over for most women – and in this, the third part of our survey into girls who take an active rather than a passive role in sex, we examine the way girls actually 'tell' their boy-friends what they like. We placed our emphasis, not on the form this love-making takes, but on the manner in which women tend to communicate their preference. We discovered that many women tend to shyness and inhibitions when it comes to communicating the sexual acts which turn them on. But given the guaranteed anonymity of Quest they felt able to reveal the steps they took to gain the pleasures they enjoy.

INTRODUCTION

This is the third part in our survey into girls who take an active instead of passive role in sex. In this part we are concerned with girls who enjoy a certain specific sex practice are are prepared to ask for this to be done to them.

We found some unexpected trends in the replies. The first, and quite surprising facet, is that while many girls today are prepared to make it clear that they are willing to go to bed with a man, very few of them will specify the form of lovemaking, even although certain techniques bring them greater pleasure. For instance, although a girl may well say to a man she has recently met: 'I think I would enjoy having sex with you' she will not say 'I would like to have cunnilingus with you' even although this practice might be the most exquisite form of pleasure for her. Similarly, a girl will not say that she enjoys having her bottom even mildly smacked, but will happily admit that she likes being dominated by a man. On the other hand we found that a girl will give the broadest possible hints of her special sexual likes, or if the man first brings up the subject, concur with him at once.

We separated from the survey the minor preferences of the technique a girl enjoys. How she likes being kissed, where she prefers being touched, the degree of gentleness or force she enjoys. In matters of this sort a girl reacts with words or movements spontaneously. She says 'oh, that hurt' or 'that's nice' or 'harder' or just moans. She does not say 'If you care to touch me there I turn on.' If a man is to learn how to please a girl in this way he has only to listen.

We were more concerned with identifying the manner in which a girl will inform a man of a major preference in sex technique, position, or form. In this area girls are still remarkably reticent in mentioning it. They prefer to wait until the relationship has reached a more intimate stage before indicating that preference. Nevertheless if the man first mentions the particular love play the girl enjoys she will freely and honestly admit her interest. The value of this survey, therefore, is in understanding the ways in which a girl is signalling her preferences, and for the man to direct the conversation and the relationships along those lines. The rewards for a man sensitive enough to develop this skill are great.

INTERVIEWS

(In the interviews that follow, all names have been changed, since interviewees are guaranteed absolute anonymity. The places of origin, where stated, are not necessarily the places where the interviewees are now resident.)

One **Buyer, 23 years old, blonde, town of origin Newark**

This interviewee, an attractive girl of considerable intelligence, had been with a major multiple store in a large Midland city since leaving school. She had worked her way up the organisation to her present well-paid position as a buyer. She had briefly been engaged when 19, but this had been broken off. At one time she lived in a flat, but a house move by her parents meant that she could now live with them.

Quest: You have talked quite freely about your sex life and sex experience. Is there any particular point you would mention?

Buyer: No, I don't think so. It has been very interesting.

Quest: In sex techniques is there anything particular you like a man to do?

Buyer: Depends what you mean. I mean we all like men to do certain things at certain times, don't we?

Quest: But is there one particular little thing, perhaps not very important sexually, that you like men to do?

Buyer: Such as?

Quest: Such as a man touching your nipples with his penis?

Buyer: Why did you say that?

Quest: Because that's what I was told you like . . .

Buyer: Who told you?

Quest: A little bird. But is it true?

Buyer: You make me all embarrassed. I do quite like it, yes. But it doesn't often happen. I mean, you're making me flustered. Sitting here fully dressed, it sounds odd. Sex habits should be private.

Quest: But you did volunteer to talk to Quest.

Buyer: Yes, I know. I'm sorry. I didn't mean to be like that. It is just that I don't talk to people about it.

Quest: If I offered to touch your nipples with my penis, would that excite you?

Buyer: No, I mean, yes. Do you mean now?

Quest: No, not now. Suppose having said that I took you out to dinner in a cosy little restaurant, would the promise of what I said I'd do later excite you?

Buyer: Yes, it would to be honest.

Quest: And this is what boys do to you?

Buyer: Some of them, yes.

Quest: Do they offer to do it to you?

Buyer: Yes, well, they don't ask or anything after the first time.

Quest: But they do it without asking the first time?

Buyer: Oh, no.

Quest: So you ask them?

Buyer: That sounds horrible. No, I sort of encourage them to.

Quest: But it takes a certain amount of agility. Surely they must be told what you want them to do?

Buyer: Well, yes, in a way. You've got to haven't you?

Quest: I imagine so. Have you ever specifically asked a boy to do this?

Buyer: Yes, occasionally, in the way that I have said it might be nice.

Quest: I think you've actually asked boys to do it the first time they've taken you out . . .

Buyer: Well things move fast these days, you mustn't be a fuddy duddy.

Quest: You seem to have recovered your cool. Will you tell me why you like this and when you first came to enjoy it?

Buyer: I suppose so if you want to. I hadn't mentioned it before because I didn't think it important. It's harmless isn't it?

Quest: Indeed, I'm sure it is. Who was the first boy?

Buyer: It was when I was still at school. In the sixth form. There was this beautiful boy also in the sixth called Dennis. We were going very steady. We petted a lot you know but we didn't have sex. Can you believe it, today?

Quest: Easily.

Buyer: So there we were, two kids in absolute rapture. It happened one night when he had borrowed his mother's car. It was only a little runabout but it was better than going by bus. He'd taken me home and we were parked down a side street. It was summer and Dennis was wearing this silk shirt his brother had sent him from abroad. It was very smooth and sexy and I was rubbing myself against him. He had undone my blouse and had been feeling my breasts, and I had undone his trousers and, you know, was holding him. Does it all sound terribly juvenile?

Quest: Far from it.

Buyer: I had undone his shirt down to the waist and suddenly with the sexy smoothness and everything I wanted to kiss his chest. I started at the top of his chest and slowly worked down. You know with little nibbling kisses. When I got near to his tummy I suddenly felt him, you know, his thing on my nipples. It was like an electric shock.

Quest: So what did you do?

Buyer: To be honest, it was so good, I swung myself a little so it was touching both nipples alternately. It was delicious.

Quest: And what did Dennis feel?

Buyer: That's the whole point. He just gave this gurgle and had this climax. On the spot. I was quite proud.

Quest: Why?

Buyer: Well, because he found my nipples sexy enough to come. I mean it wasn't as if he was inside me or anything. He wasn't even feeling me down there.

Quest: So it then became a regular thing with Dennis?

Buyer: No it didn't. He had a bit of a car crash a little later and he changed a lot. And then he went to university and then I heard he was engaged to this girl. Ships that pass in the night.

Quest: But you tried this with other men?

Buyer: Yes, if the opportunity occurred.

Quest: But how could it occur unless you suggested it? It's not a thing a man automatically thinks you will enjoy.

Buyer: You'd be surprised what men think of doing. They don't need much encourage-

ment. Sometimes they get the wrong end of the stick. Perhaps when I've been holding it I have said 'I know what I'd like to do with this,' and they think I want them to give it to me.
Quest: I think you are not being quite clear. You mean they think you're inviting them to seduce you when you only want them to touch your nipples with their penis?
Buyer: Or kiss it. Most men think you're dying to kiss it.
Quest: And you're not?
Buyer: Certainly not, I dislike it.
Quest: But you have done that?
Buyer: I didn't mean to. But anyway I expect you know about that?
Quest: Why should I?
Buyer: Because the man who did that is the man who told you about me. I'm sure so.
Quest: Tell me about the man.
Buyer: It was this party over in the smart area of the town. It started off so smooth with every one on best behaviour but there was so much booze that it quickly got out of hand. Then they had this room set up as a discotheque and there was dancing in the dark. I was just outside the door, this boy I'd been chatting to had gone off to the toilet or something and then this man, Rodney came up. What a name, Rodney. He was dark and very good looking and I sort of smiled when he came up to me but that didn't last long.
Quest: Why not?
Buyer: On account of what he said. He looked me right in the eyes and said wasn't I the girl who liked my bosom tickled.
Quest: Were those his exact words?
Buyer: Well, not quite. He said, wasn't I the girl who liked her titties tickled with a John Thomas. Then he patted his trousers and said would that do. I thought he was drunk at first.
Quest: At first? You mean he wasn't?
Buyer: Not at all. That was his normal confident approach. What they used to call bold, I suppose.
Quest: And what happened?
Buyer: When he took me home he invited me into his flat. We began to pet a bit and I let him get my bra off but I would not let him touch my pants.
Quest: Why not?
Buyer: Because of what he'd said. It was only because of that that I had gone home with him in the first place.
Quest: For the pleasure of having your nipples tickled by his penis? Unusual.
Buyer: Put like that yes. It was just that he was going to pet me in the way I liked and I wasn't prepared to have sex. What's unusual about that?
Quest: Nothing. So he got your bra off. I presume that meant he had taken your dress of ?
Buyer: Yes, but I had my pants and tights on. They weren't coming off.
Quest: And what did he have on?
Buyer: Rodney just had his underpants on. And perhaps his shirt. I forget. He was stripped for action anyway, he had thought I was an easy lay, I expect. He was quite a randy lover, I'll say that for him and when we came to do it he sat across my tummy and had his hands on my shoulders. He began to flick me with his penis and it was delicious. I told him he was quite an expert and I was moaning a bit and turning my head from side to side and my nipples felt like bursting they were so stiff. I was turning my head to either side a bit and that was why I didn't think it was odd when he moved his hands to the side of my head and held it still. He was leaning forward and suddenly he was in my mouth. It was sudden I couldn't do anything. I went to bite him but he immediately took his hand and pinched my nipple so hard I had to scream out. He was so cruel, that man. I hated him.
Quest: Did he have a climax?
Buyer: Oh why do I blush so easily? It's stupid.
Quest: Thank you, I don't think you need answer that question.

Two **Housewife, 31 years old, brunette, town of origin Halifax**

This interviewee had been a pharmaceutical assistant and had left her job on her marriage six years ago. She had had a number of part-time jobs in the last four years but at the time of interview had no outside job as she and her husband had recently moved from a flat to an oldish house which she was renovating and redecorating. They had no children. She contacted us following a challenge from her that Northern wives were more honest and forthcoming than those in the South of England.

Quest: In sex do you have a favourite position?
Housewife: Yes, as a matter of fact I have.
Quest: Which is that?
Housewife: Not the usual one, I confess. I like it like the animals do it. From behind.
Quest: Does that please your husband?

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MAY 7

Housewife: You bet, but he wasn't keen at first, I don't think. But I soon conquered that.

Quest: How?

Housewife: We were all missionary position in the dark. When I suggested the other way he said it was too cold or something. So one bedtime when we were going to have sex I left my stockings and suspender belt on (it was some years ago, of course) and took everything else off and just got ready for him like that, making sure I left the light on.

Quest: How did that persuade him to try sex another way?

Housewife: You should have seen me! Face down on the bed with my bottom in the air. Georgie got the message all right, I knew he would. Now he often suggests it. Likes me to have boots on, if you please.

Quest: Do you usually get your own way with sex?

Housewife: With Georgie you mean?

Quest: Not necessarily.

Housewife: You're altering names, aren't you? It's secret?

Quest: Absolutely.

Housewife: You see we had this sexy greengrocer. How corny can you get. Always took to delivering my stuff. Could I see right through him. Offering to deliver a lettuce and half a pound of tomatoes, then turning up in a smart sweater. It was perfectly obvious he fancied me. So I thought nothing ventured nothing gained. I offered him a cup of tea and we had a chat. He was very sexy in his talk, always complimented me on my figure and things. Then he asked if I liked sex, and I said if it was the right way and he asked what was the right way and I said with the man behind. He was quite taken aback. He said he'd never done it that way. We're not a very sophisticated neighbourhood you know. Anyway, he didn't do anything then but the next time he came round I was in my dressing gown.

Quest: Why was that?

Housewife: I'd had this neuralgia and was stiff so I had this hot herbal bath.

Quest: Did you know the greengrocer was coming?

Housewife: Not definitely. I knew he was going to deliver but I didn't know when. When he came he asked what was wrong and he said that in the army he had taken a massage course. He could help me. We went into the lounge but there was nowhere to lie so he suggested I should lie on the bed upstairs. He made me lie face downwards and then he just gently pulled back the dressing gown and massaged my shoulders. It was lovely.

Quest: You had nothing on underneath?

Housewife: No I had just got out of the bath.

Quest: What had he got on?

Housewife: His jacket and trousers. He had taken his shoes off. He was kneeling on either side of my hips and then he went too far. His hands came round on to my breasts. I wanted to show him he'd taken liberties so I pushed my bottom up in the air to bump him, you know. But as soon as I did that I could feel that he was hard. He just slid the gown off me and there I was stark naked. He began to push against my bottom and I knew what he wanted. I made him take his trousers off, I hate sex in trousers. He was very eager, I knew I was turning him on terribly. He wasn't very good, actually, but it was his first time that way. He wanted to do it regularly but I knew it would be too dangerous. A slip's OK but a greengrocer popping in for a bit of the other every week would soon get back to Georgie.

Quest: So now you live a virginal life?

Housewife: Except for Georgie, yes.

Quest: But it was not like that before your marriage?

Housewife: How right. I was a fast little tearaway.

Quest: Promiscuous?

Housewife: Boy mad, I suppose. I was always a bit of a leader at school, even. We had a little gang and we would grab boys. You know, their marriage gear. They loved it, the dirty little buggers. I suppose that's not fair, really. Some of them were a bit scared.

Quest: What did you do beyond groping them?

Housewife: If they'd agreed to come down our local lane, undo their fly buttons and look at it. Make it stand up. You know.

Quest: And did you have sex?

Housewife: Not really. I offered to with one boy but he didn't really get inside. We told everybody we had and I think that by now he really thinks he did. Not proper sex though.

Quest: So even then you were inviting a boy to have sex?

Housewife: It wasn't as bad as that. But I told you I was always a bit of a leader.

Quest: When did you first decide you wanted sex from behind?

Housewife: I know well when it was. I was about 18. I had an elder sister, she was about 23 then. She had this boy friend who'd been married and was awaiting his divorce. They're married now. I came in one day unexpectedly, mum was out, and as I passed sis's door I could see it was open and she and Dick were having it that way. I guessed they had sex together but it was a bit of a shock. Just his bare arse. They were so like animals. I remember I lay in bed that night and so wanted sex.

Quest: Had you had proper sex then?

Housewife: Once or twice. Then shortly after I got a proper boy friend and after about a month we had sex together. I can remember the disappointment to this day. Missionary position and him on top of me. He was a rugby player and weighed about twelve stone. I said to him, didn't he know any other ways and I can still see his astonishment 'What other ways are there?' he said, all suspicious. God, men can be clods. 'I'll show you' I said and got on all fours and poked my bottom at him. He soon got the message. Mind you, it didn't do us any good. He thought I was a nympho and I only saw him once after that. That's my Yorkshire bluntness I suppose. I think he told some of the boys because at a dance about a month later this big miner came up to me. Great strapping brute with a big black beard, that was unusual in miners, it fills with coal dust. He was very clean mind, you could have eaten your dinner off him, my mum said. He knew what it was all about. He took me out for a Sunday evening walk the very next day. As soon as we got out of town, he had my drawers down and bent me over a stile, without a 'by your leave.' He had me in tatters, I was bruised and my stockings laddered, but he was grand. He had me three times in that walk each time from behind. I suppose after that there was no other way for me. Even today to think of those great hands swallowing my breasts as he did it, gets me shivering. He was a lovely man, a sex machine.

Quest: Did the relationship last?

Housewife: No. He had a drink problem. He used to drink nine or ten pints a day and sometimes just not turn up on dates, or turn up drunk. I can't stand beery breath. That's another reason why I like it from behind. He can't be kissing you at the same time.

Quest: Do you have sex any other way?

Housewife: Oh yes, lot of ways. Georgie sent off for that sex position book of yours. That's got lots of good ideas and you don't need to be a contortionist, but there's nowt like the old ways as they are always saying up here.

Quest: Thank you.

Three **Secretary, 20 years old, brunette, town of origin Wolverhampton**

This interviewee, a lively and vivacious girl, had gone to secretarial college and had had a number of secretarial jobs. She was now a private secretary to a sales director. She lived at home with her mother and younger sister.

Quest: You said earlier in our discussion that you liked strong-willed men. Can you tell me more?

Secretary: I'm not sure it's true, actually. When I think back I remember some sweet boys who were a bit shy. I suppose it's the dithering boy I don't like, you know, the one who's always asking what film you'd like to see or what you'd like to do. I really play them up.

Quest: And how do they react?

Secretary: They get all concerned and start trying to placate me and soothe me, the silly things.

Quest: Silly things? What should they do?

Secretary: Tan my bottom. I suppose. My dad would have done.

Quest: Did your father beat you often?

Secretary: Only when I deserved it. When I was young, you know. Not when I was grown up.

Quest: Does he still do it?

Secretary: He's dead.

Quest: I'm sorry.

Secretary: Oh that's all right. He died a long time ago.

Quest: But sometimes you feel you could do with a good spanking?

Secretary: Well, depends what you mean by a good spanking. Not too hard. I hate cruelty.

Quest: Do you know this is the first time in any Quest interview that a girl has said she liked being spanked. I had come to the conclusion that girls hated it.

Secretary: Don't you believe it. There's a girl in my office who would love a bit of a spanking but her boy friend is too dim to do anything about it.

Quest: How about her boss or someone at the office?

Secretary: You don't want your boss smacking your bum, do you? Not unless he's very dishy.

Quest: So what do you do when you want smacking?

Secretary: I ask for it.

Quest: In what way?

Secretary: Either by provoking the boy until he does something or else telling him he can.

Quest: How does that work?

Secretary: Depends on the boy. Well, sometimes, and sometimes not. The first boy I had who spanked me was quite shy. I'd been throwing tantrums and things and he put up with them all. So that evening I said to him that I had been rotten and if I was like that a good spanking would do me good. But he never would. It didn't happen until I was naked.

Quest: You've lost me I'm afraid.

Secretary: Sorry. Mick and I had driven out to this lonely lovers' spot. Mick could be very passionate and clothes can be a bother. Anyway, I finished up with no clothes on. He'd taken off everything. I hadn't objected, of course. I was lying in his arms and I said this thing again about him spanking me if I was naughty. I suppose it was because he could see my bottom in the moonlight but he turned me over and gave me a few half-hearted slaps. I told him to go harder but he was scared of hurting me.

Quest: So you like being hurt a bit?

Secretary: Well, tingly, yes.

Quest: And most boys are anxious not to hurt you?

Secretary: Oh no, some go the other way. Geoffrey, for instance, could be a bastard. A lovely bastard, though.

Quest: This I must hear.

Secretary: Don't gloat when a poor defenceless girl's telling her all.

Quest: Get on with it or you'll get your bottom smacked.

Secretary: Well, really, hear the masterful one.

Quest: Sorry, love. Tell me about Geoffrey.

Secretary: Geoffrey was tall and lean and a wee bit kinky. He was also very intelligent and he understood me through and through.

Quest: Go on.

Secretary: I met him at a party. He took my phone number but he didn't ring. Then I saw him in the High Street by chance. He didn't try and avoid me or anything. He just said sorry he hadn't rung yet but was I doing anything that night. I went out with him to a pub. He was very interesting. Well, he seemed interesting. He was very interested in me, actually. Asked me a lot about myself and I found myself telling him things I hadn't told any other boys.

Quest: Such as the fact that you like being spanked?

Secretary: No, not that. He never asked.

Quest: But he found out?

Secretary: No, not that night. We just petted a little that was all. But one night I said to him that if I was unbearable he was to spank me and he looked at me strangely and said nothing. When we got home, he didn't stop outside the house but drove on to a lane nearby. He stopped and we were kissing quite passionately and then he said 'Get across my knee'. I asked him why and he just said 'To teach you obedience' and he pushed my head down. I felt all excited and when he pulled my skirt up I was trembling. He pulled down my pants and I could feel the cold air but not for long. His hand came down hard. I was soon squirming and tingling. I begged him to stop but he went on until the tears were in my eyes. 'There', he said, 'that should warm you up.' Then he made me kiss him and thank him for what he had done. My pants were still round my calves and as I kissed him I could feel him hard. He was so passionate. He unbuttoned himself and I could feel him warm against me. He felt me with his hand and smiled. 'You're all warm, wet and willing,' he said. I'll always remember that. I clung to him and cried, I must have been emotionally upset, and he went right deep into me. I was just melting. He felt such a great comfort to me. Am I talking daft?

Quest: Not at all.

Secretary: I don't think I am. I will always remember that moment. It's like a moment on the film. My abject surrender. I was mad about Geoffrey after that.

Quest: And did he continue to dominate you and discipline you?

Secretary: You can say that again. That's why I say he was a bit kinky. He hadn't spanked me at all for a long time, and one Saturday afternoon we were in the country, on a ramble of all things, and I had said something and he had said I was a saucy minx or something and I said with a sort of mock sigh 'I expect I need discipline' or something and Geoffrey said 'What you want is the cane' and I opened my eyes and said 'Ooh lovely' or something like that. I was putting it on a bit, you know.

Quest: I can imagine.

Secretary: But Geoffrey wasn't joking. He said very seriously: 'That's exactly what you're going to get, but not until the end of the day, and then you're going to wish you hadn't said that.' It really put me in a tizzy. You know, I had never had the cane, not at school or at home. I thought it would hurt and I was a bit afraid and a bit excited at the same time. It made me nervous and when that happens I get a bit out of hand and I was teasing Geoffrey and goading him and things. Geoffrey didn't do anything at all. I suppose I rather hoped he'd just put me across his knee as he had before and then it would be over with. Almost a game really. But this was more serious. Anyway, just before we reached the station Geoffrey said 'This hedge will do. Cut yourself a cane.' And he gave me this penknife. I thought he was joking but he wasn't. It was a strange thrill, do you understand, cutting the cane that you were going to be beaten with. Like digging your own grave, I suppose. I cut this hazel wand, thing. It was long and straight. Geoffrey tried it and made it whip through the air. I shivered when I heard it. I said to him 'We're not going to do it here' and he said 'No, not yet. Let's get the train.'

We got this train and I felt very excited somehow. There we were in this carriage with other people and this cane on the luggage rack. I'm sure they knew what it was for. One man, in particular, kept looking at it, and grinned when he got out.

Quest: Where did you go to in the train?

Secretary: To . . . . . where Geoffrey lived. It was dark by then and we went to his digs. The house was in darkness and I think he knew there would be no-one else in. We went up to his room in silence and we got inside. He put the electric kettle on and I made some coffee. Then he put down his cup and said 'You have been an absolute bitch all day, and you are going to pay for it. Come here.' I got up very meekly and went towards him. I was smiling a bit and he said 'Wipe that smile off your face for a start. Now bend over.' I was flabbergasted. I began to protest but in the end I did. I was wearing these denim shorts and they were quite tight so I knew he was getting a good view. Then he said 'Undo your belt and drop your shorts.' I began to straighten up and he said 'Keep bending.' I began to protest and ask him not to hurt me but he gave me a little stinger with the end of the cane. I dropped my shorts and he said now bend over. I was glad I had these tiny pink bikini briefs on. Then I felt his hand on them and he was pulling them down. 'No

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Geoffrey,' I said. 'Enough is enough.' 'Enough is not enough for you,' he said. 'Bend over. Now touch your toes.' The back of my legs were hurting and I said 'oh oh' or something. But Geoffrey didn't say anything. He kept me there while he turned out all the lights except one table lamp. Then he swished the cane a couple of times. It made me shudder. But when he hit me with it across my bottom, it was awful. I'd never been in such pain. 'No Geoffrey,' I said, 'I'll be good.' 'Too late,' he said, 'you should have thought of that before, bend over again.' I didn't know what he was doing. I must have been mad. He gave me at least six and every time I straightened up he gave me a painful cut across the top of my thighs. I was crying and a bit hysterical. He said I could make as much noise as I liked it wouldn't matter. I was red and so humiliated. He said he was going to tie me to the bed and make love to me like that but I begged him not to. I just wanted him to take me home. He did in the end. When I got in I looked at my bottom, it had these red weals across it. I had to make sure my mother and sister didn't see.

Quest: And that cured you of caning?

Secretary: It cured me of Geoffrey. In the morning I decided I hated him and wouldn't go out with him again. But he must have been ashamed, too, because he never asked me again.

Quest: And have you been caned since?

Secretary: Not really, once with an office ruler, but that's a different story. And it didn't hurt much. But I still like being spanked if I'm naughty.

Quest: And are you often naughty?

Secretary: Not often.

Quest: Well, I regret to say you have been very good throughout this interview . . .

Secretary: You've still got to see me home.

SURVEY SUMMARY

The problem facing a girl who likes a particular sex practice is a difficult one. To voice that predilection is to risk the man thinking the girl is 'odd', sexually precocious, or even a nymphomaniac. It is a measure of how little has really been achieved in the breakdown of male dominance. For a man to be explicit in his sexual requirements does not brand him in any way unless the actual requirement is 'unusual'. Thus in these interviews the girls do not, boldly and bluntly, ask for a man to treat them sexually in a particular way. But they do come very close to asking. They just voice their requests a little obliquely.

In interview one, the girl's special pleasure was a mild one, perhaps growing out of her feeling of elation and success when it first happened by accident. Its very mildness presents a problem in that it can be called a form of petting and thus would be acceptable at an early stage in the relationship. But at that stage of the relationship the practice, which requires a certain agility and benefits from nudity, is more awkward to suggest. This girl seemed to be under pressure to have full sexual intercourse with men in order to bring the relationship to a stage where her own special pleasure could be viewed as an amusing by-product of their sexual relationship.

In interview two, conducted as a result of a challenge from the woman, it was interesting to see how early in the conversation with the greengrocer she turned the talk to her own special pleasure. In her case, of course, it was easier because she was referring to an accepted variation of sex position. Since this woman was most insistent on honesty it was interesting to see that she obviously believed it was only chance that led to her being naked except for dressing gown when the man called. A likely story, the cynic may think.

In the third interview, the girl had a method of referring to her predilection obliquely. It is easy for a girl cheerfully to admit that she is in need of a restraining hand, or recognising the benefit of discipline. It is fairly easy for her to stop the treatment if she feels it has gone too far. It was particularly interesting to see that this girl was prepared to take a fair amount in view of her willingness to let the boy cane her, a virtual impossibility without her co-operation. We were quite surprised to hear the comparative reluctance of some of the boy friends to spank her since in our Quest experience to slap a girl's bare bottom is the most widespread and popular of male wish-fantasies.

ALVIVACITY

That was the old pre-war advertising slogan. But they also had integrity, says Mayfair motor expert WB, who looks at a now sadly defunct marque

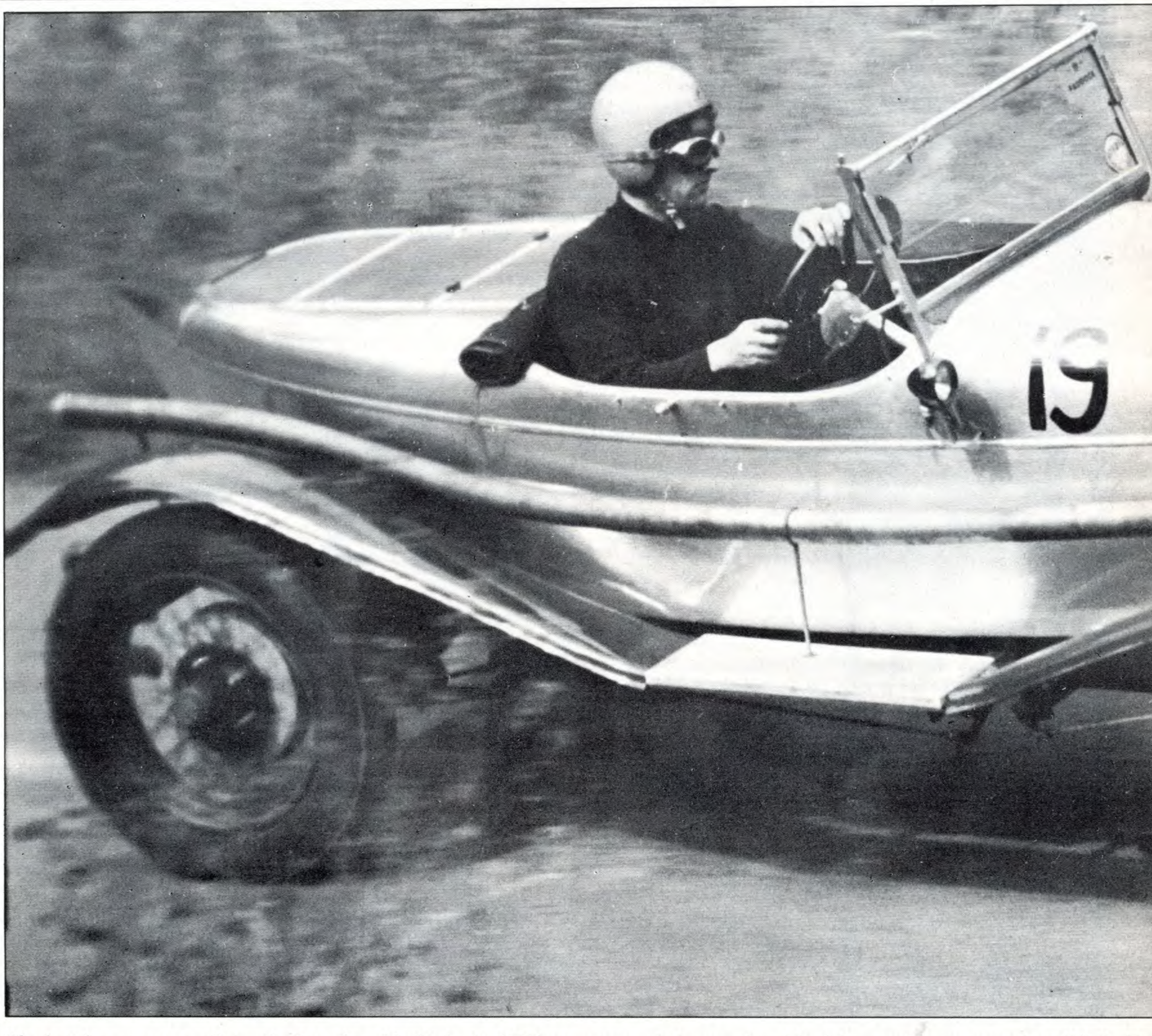
Alvis is dead, long live Alvis! This great Coventry-built motor-car holds many memories for me, because during the period around World War Two I owned a considerable number of them, mainly the indestructible 12/50, which in those days you could buy in goodish going order for £35 or less.

In fact, my much-loved, and much-used, 1928 12/50 doctor's coupé set me back about £12 and it had few faults – although possibly the medical profession would have objected to the sacking which served it in lieu of the original leather hood-covering.

It was this reputation for ruggedness, allied to a sporting flavour, which endeared the Alvis to so many people and has caused legends to be built up around it, and for two active clubs, the 12/50 Register and the Alvis Owner Club, to be formed. These hyper-keen organisations organised a Round-Britain Tour in 1970, which shows how much faith Alvis owners have in their cars.

The car started as a high-class but not particularly outstanding side-valve affair, the 10/30, which grew up into the 11/40 of 1½-litres engine size. Then in 1923 the Alvis engineers put a push-rod overhead-valve head onto the 12/40 engine and evolved the now immortal 12/50.

Came the Junior Car Club 200-Mile Race round and round and round the track



The best-known sporty Alvis: the legendary 'duck's-back' 12/50 two-seater of the twenties. Mayfair motoring correspondent Bill Boddy at Brooklands. Talbot-Darracq had won this twice in succession, in 1921 and 1922, and it was anticipated that they would do so again and score the hat-trick. Not so. Fiat was said to be entering *supercharged* 1½-litre racers. This was too much for the invincible Talbots. They slunk away to race elsewhere, well clear of the Weybridge limelight.

The sensational Fiats, to be driven by Salamano and Malcolm Campbell, arrived and proved excitingly fast. Win, it seemed, they must. But trouble beset both of them, early in the grind. What it was and why constitutes one of motor racing's leading mysteries, about which I was pleased to expound, but not exactly solve, in *Motor Sport* some time ago.

With the Fiats out, C. M. Harvey's 12/50 Alvis, after some hot work with a Bugatti and an AC, went on to a convincing victory. The British car was closely akin to the catalogue Alvis, apart from a rather sophisticated back-axle layout.

The win did wonders for Alvis prestige. From then on, the Coventry car was one of the greatest 1½-litre sports-cars you could buy. It won other races and I remember Tim Carson, knowledgeable recently-retired secretary of the Vintage Sports Car Club, saying that in his days at Brooklands, where he diced in Vauxhalls, the chain-driven Frazer Nash was regarded as a joke compared to the 12/50.

The fact is that the 12/50 Alvis was both an effective and a beautiful motor-car. It came, expensively, in duck's-arse two-seater form, with its spare wheel tucked under its angular upswept tail, in which there was a hole for a third intrepid passenger. This model, in polished aluminium, with sweeping aluminium mudguards and running 'boards' all in one, and copper outside exhaust pipe, was a magnificently handsome car.

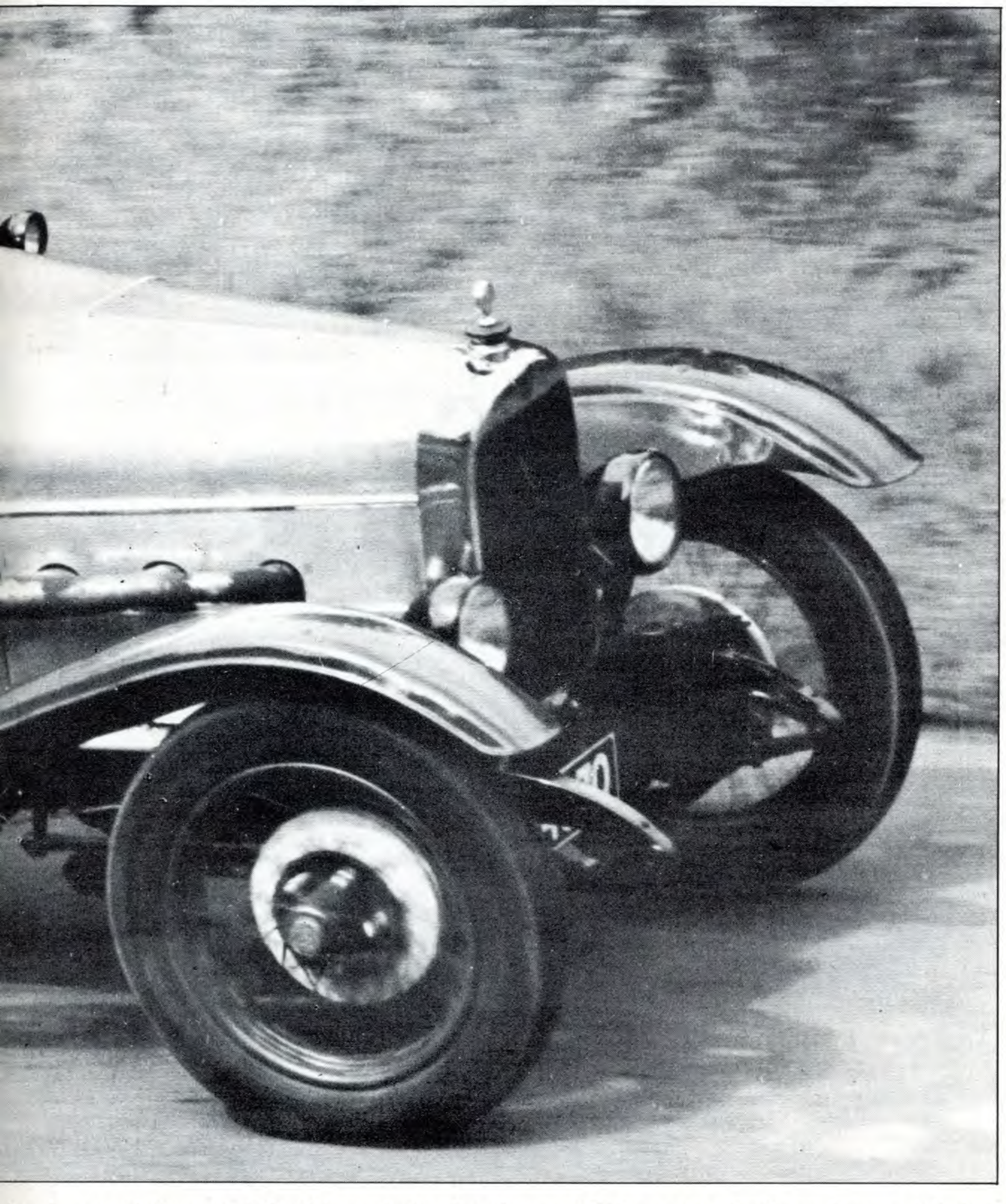
The advertisements featuring it were woven around a sports-girl, a beret-clad flapper of the 'twenties, who rode daring and free in Bertie's Super Sports Alvis. Enthralling pictures of this fine Alvis, climbing Alms Hill near Henley-on-Thames, or speeding along country lanes, appeared in *Motor Sport* with Richard Twelvetrees, its then-Editor, in fur-trimmed flying helmet and leather coat, driving it. It was impossible not to be thrilled by the 12/50.

It was, in fact, as simple as it was fast and durable. It had a push-rod ohv four-cylinder engine which scorned water-pump and fan and took its petrol from a scuttle tank by gravity. It had a four-speed gearbox controlled by the then-customary right-hand shift stick. There could be cable-operated front-wheel-brakes but bolt-on wire wheels sufficed. After the duck's-back came the beetle-back, more rounded-tail, sports model and various tourers. The engine was available in short-stroke and long-stroke versions, of just under and just over 1½-litres, respectively.

Hardly had the reputation of these 12/50s, hand-assembled from high-class materials, been established, than Alvis Limited were off on another impressive venture. They came out with a front-wheel-drive sporting motor-car, at a time when this form of drive was rare indeed and inspired mostly Continental designers. The 12/50 engine was turned back-to-front and then a new engine endowed with an overhead camshaft was evolved, and the front wheels were suspended on duplicated short tranverse leaf springs. The first FWD Alvis was a very lightweight racing affair and there were racing and sports-racing straight-eights of varying degrees of elaboration.

But in the main the FWD Alvis was a four-cylinder job, which followed the 1923 200-Mile Race 12/50 into the annals of racing fame by coming home second in a memorable 1928 Ards TT, driven by Leon Cushman. It was close upon Kaye Don's winning Hyper Lea-Francis and there are even pundits who say it really won but that a lap mis-count blurred the results – another motor racing mystery for you to solve.

Anyway, the FWD Alvis, if a noisy brute and a curious car to handle, was now very much sought after. Running in several other important races, it established the Alvis technicians who evolved these cars with the red-triangle badge as



bought one of these for £12. This particular shot shows a 12/50 cornering hard at a Prescott hill-climb far from faint-hearted engineers.

As the vintage period ebbed away and a new era dawned, the Alvis kept in the forefront of development and was well liked by those who shopped for high-grade automobiles. The Speed Twenty, with six-cylinder engine and clusters of valve springs, grew into the Speed Twenty-Five and larger-engined sporting carriages. These graceful Alvises became faster and more accelerative, culminating in the 100 mph 4.3-litre, indeed a formidable sports car in open form and one of the fastest saloons of the pre-war period. Some of the more boudoir Alvis models took on names like Silver Crest, Silver Eagle, and Crested Eagle, which it amuses me to think were so-called to take the stand with Rolls-Royce's Silver Ghost and Alpine Eagle. In sober fact before the war the 4.3-litre Alvis short-chassis tourer, developing 137 bhp at a distinctly modest 3,600 rpm, could do its 105 mph timed on Brooklands track, and the standing-start ¼-mile in 18.2 seconds, before the war, pulling a 3.82 top gear.

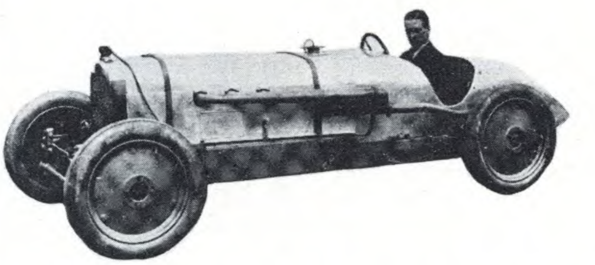
Before the war the 12/50 re-emerged as the refined 12/70 with a central gear-change, and this survived the period of hostilities to re-appear as the TA14, of which many still serve the motoring community. Pre-war, too, there had been the Firebird form.

Then came the great post-war Alvis 3-litre, a quality car reflecting the merits of the Alvis radial aero-engines.

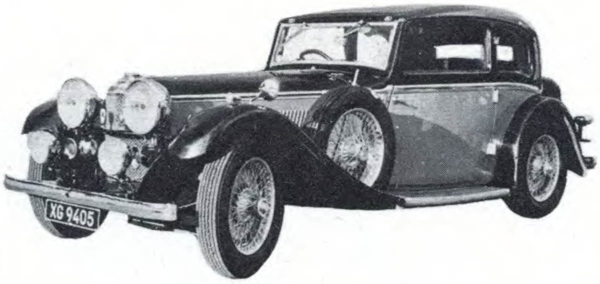
The fine range of Alvis post-war cars is still seen in numbers on our roads and some people prefer to invest in them rather than purchase new cars. The first truly new post-WW2 Alvis was the TA21 six-cylinder. The Alvis Grey Lady could be taken as a snide reply to Rolls-Royce's Silver Wraith and Silver Dawn.

This developed into the well-liked TC 21/100, which had 100 bhp under its long bonnet and 100 mph as its top speed. On this chassis was mounted the extremely handsome Graber saloon, an Alvis which took the 1955 motor shows by storm. For 1959 this became available with a 120 bhp engine, re-named the TD21.

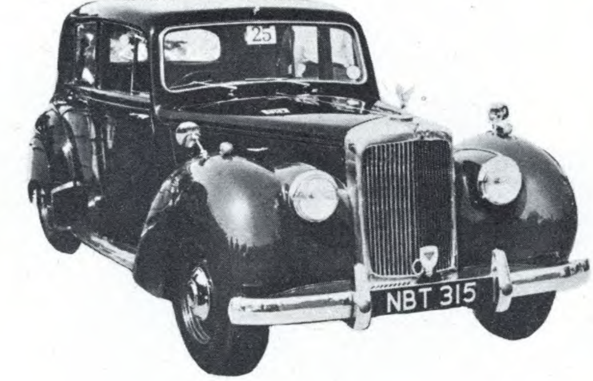
The future of the little company, built up by T. G. John with Capt. Smith-Clarke as its 1923 Chief Engineer, looked unusually promising. The TD21 was given disc brakes all round and a 130 bhp five-speed model called the TE21 was released for the 1964 season. But the age of take-overs was upon them and Rover acquired Alvis by 1965. A couple of sad years later Alvis private-cars, as distinct from ingenious military cross-country vehicles, were no more. Alvis never did get around to building Issigonis' very advanced model, with V8 engine and sophisticated suspension.



1925: the four-cylinder Alvis front-wheel drive racing car



1934: the 2.7-litre Speed Twenty, first with synchromesh



1954: the TA21 saloon, the first truly new post-war Alvis

1963: the last of a long line, the TD21 three-litre coupé

If anyone doubts the quality and selectiveness of the more recent Alvis cars, let them reflect that the 3-litre was killed off when the coachbuilding firm of Mulliners of Birmingham was absorbed by Standard's in 1954 and that this caused Alvis to enter into negotiation with Carrosserie Herman Graber of Berne. When they had arranged for Willowbrook of Loughborough to build Graber bodies the Alvis TC 108/G appeared. But it cost £3,500 and only sixteen were ever made. Compare that with 760 Rolls-Royce Silver Dawns.

This Graber Alvis in improved form got going when its bodywork was produced by Park Ward and the price fell to around £3,000. It is these late-model Alvis cars which some connoisseurs continue to regard as the equal in individuality, refinement and performance to the very latest of the present-day luxury cars.

Alvis had a long innings. They produced good light cars, excellent vintage sports-cars, advanced front-wheel-drive cars, elegant post-war saloons and fine aero engines. Their engineers obtained remarkable efficiency without mechanical complication in the early designs, yet they grappled manfully with the problems of front-drive, supercharging, independent front suspension and synchro-mesh gearboxes. They pioneered the first catalogue car with an all-synchromesh gearbox in 1933, with the Speed Twenty.

If the allure of the Rolls-Royce, the magic of the Silver Lady, wears a bit thin, today's prices being what they are, the Red Triangle, the Grey Lady, might be a worthwhile solution. Certainly if you feel this could be the case, members of the Alvis Owner Club will be the last to contradict you.

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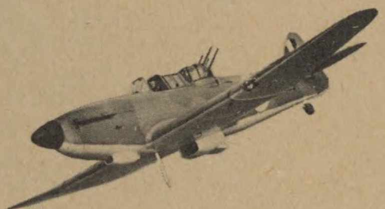

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